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LOST.

I had a little rosebud given to me,
I dropped it as I wore it one fair day;
I would not turn to seek it—no; for then
'Twere plain I prized it! so I went my way.

I had a love that made my life a joy,
It seemed to falter one bright summer day;
I could have won it back with but a smile;
I would not smile, and so I went my way.

O Pride! thou stealest our most treasured things,
Things which to gain we'd risk all else beside;
Lost, lost my rosebud, lost my love, alas!
I might have found them but for thee, O Pride!

LIGHT AT LAST.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "A BROKEN WEDDING RING," "THORNS AND BLOSSOMS," "WHICH LOVED HIM BEST?" ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER VII. CONTINUED.

A QUARTER of an hour later Lord Wynmore, after a cordial leave-taking of Mr. John Charlford and his nieces and nephew and a renewed invitation to them to come over to the Manor, was riding along on his homeward way, and Mabel's heart was pulsating quickly with a new feeling of happiness as she remembered Lord Wynmore's look and pleasant smile at her as he said good-bye.

"He is like a friend," thought the young girl, flushing with pleasure; "and perhaps he will be Dick's friend too."

"Suppose we walk as far as the top of Crayley Hill?" said uncle John, turning to his nieces. "There will be time before dinner, and we have been sitting down most of the afternoon." He was in high good humor; to have had so long a visit from one of the magnates of the neighborhood—a fastidious young fellow with whom every one strove to claim acquaintance, and who could be very distant in his manner when he chose—chased away Mr. Charlford's usual sarcastic temper. "And where is Dick?" he asked, looking about.

"Shall I go and tell him we are going to Crayley Hill, uncle?" asked Mabel.

She was sure enough of what her brother was about. He had no doubt slipped off the moment Lord Wynmore had said good-bye, and had by this time exchanged the wrong box for the right one. But what did the other contain; and who could have put it under the leaves? With an uneasy feeling that it might belong to her father or to Caroline's secret lover, Mab, stifling her impatience to ascertain, set out for Crayley Hill with her uncle and Caroline.

She wondered why uncle John talked as much to her as to her sister; usually he scarcely addressed a word to her, and habitually excluded her from the conversation. It had not yet dawned upon Mab that her own problematical future greatness was the cause of this unwonted graciousness towards her.

In spite of the absence of fault-finding, it seemed an interminable time till their return to the house, when she flew to Dick's room to find her brother; and then, to her dismay, she found Dick's door was fastened.

She knocked impatiently, but the answer which came was not encouraging—

"Who's there? I'm getting ready for dinner."

With tears in her eyes, Mab dressed and went down. There was nothing for it but to wait till bed-time for any confidences with Dick.

The evening wore away slowly. Dick was silent and thoughtful—"very unlike his usual self," thought Mab; and she wondered anew what he had discovered in the box which she had found by mistake. Was that to be a fresh source of trouble? Why did Dick look so grave; and what could he have been doing before dinner?

Immediately the meal was ended she made an effort to escape into the garden; but that was not to be. Her uncle asked her to play chess with him, and she could only managed to get through the game passably. Dick had disappeared, and only came in late. He had been out to give the dogs a run, he said.

At length, after all her weary hours of waiting, she found herself once more in her own room, her door ajar, listening for Dick's footstep in the corridor. And in about a quarter of an hour he came. Quickly and silently Mab glided out, awaiting him near the large window, where they could both sit in the old-fashioned window-seat and talk unobserved.

How eagerly she greeted him! She trembled with agitation at the bare idea of what Dick would say and feel. But her brother's manner was very disappointing.

"Be as quick as you can, there's a dear girl," he said, "for I have something to do to-night."

"Whatever it is, you must hear what I have to tell, Dick, or I think I shall lose my senses!" she cried. "Oh, if you could guess what I have had to suffer since last night! But before I say a word to you, tell me what you found in that box I took in by mistake."

"Papers," he returned laconically.

"Papers?" interrogated Mab. "Have you looked at any of them? What are they about?"

"Well, I can hardly tell you that off-hand Mab. I have not read them all; they seem to be letters to a man named Filton, whoever he may be."

To Dick's surprise, Mab uttered a stifled cry.

"Filton?" she gasped out. "Filton!"

"Yes, that is the name. You don't know anything of him, surely, Mab? He appears to be an unscrupulous sort of man."

"Not know him?" she echoed, in pathetic tones. "Oh, Dick, Dick, I fear we all know him! I am afraid he is our father!" And Mab, quite overwhelmed with the vague terrors of the day before, clasped her brother's arm convulsively and burst into tears.

The young fellow, who began to need comfort himself, tried by fond words to calm her grief, beseeching her "to tell him all." Some minutes however elapsed before she had sufficiently recovered to do so. When at last she was able to speak calmly, she imparted her secret briefly.

"I got down to the boat-house just as the moon was rising," she said, "and stooped down and found immediately—as I thought—the box you left there. Then, Dick, I heard voices in the boat-house, and, too frightened to fly, I crouched close to the woodwork and peeped through the chinks. Presently I heard father's voice; and I knew him too, even by the dim light in the boat-house."

"Impossible!" cried Dick. "Father is abroad; he has written to tell us of his journey. You must have been mistaken, Mab!"

"No, I was not," she rejoined. "How could I mistake our father? Do you think I should not know his voice among a thousand? Besides, the man who was with him spoke to him as Charlford, and father interrupted him sharply, saying he was mad to use that name there—that he was Filton till he resumed ordinary life. Now do you believe me, Dick?"

"Good heavens!" muttered the young man, transfixed with horror, for he thought that his father must have something terrible to conceal if he had actually been there in disguise.

"That is not all," faltered Mab, in a whisper. "Oh, dear Dick, I am so sorry that it is not all! Father crept out of the boat-house—he was wearing a broad-brimmed hat—and then skulked away, keeping in the shadows. When he was gone, the other man came out close to me and waited; and I was so terrified that I slipped into the boat-house to hide. But I had only just time to conceal myself in the cupboard, when he came back, and some one else was with him. It is dreadful to have to tell you who it was, Dick. For it was Caroline, and she is engaged to be married to that man, who cares nothing for her—who only pretends to love her, I am sure, from what I overheard him mutter to himself before she came. And she is absolutely devoted to him; she is evidently blinded by her love for him. Oh, Dick, Dick, what shall we do?" And Mab, utterly weary and dispirited, clung to her brother, and hid her tears on his shoulder.

Dick—confused, alarmed, full of trouble as he was—did his best to comfort her; but to answer her last question was not easy. At length however, when they had talked on till they dared stay no longer, for uncle John's footsteps sounded in the hall below, they settled that Mab should tell Caroline that she had been in the boat-house when Caroline met her lover, and beseech her to have nothing more to do with him, since from what Mab had overheard he was deceiving her with a show of affection. Both Mab and Dick were unanimous in deciding that it was best not to tell Caroline anything of the mystery concerning their father; but whether they should broach the subject to uncle John, who was probably in the secret, Dick could not determine so readily.

Unhappy brother and sister! For the first time in their lives they longed for their father's home-coming.

CHAPTER VIII.

Breakfast was over, and uncle John had called Dick into his gun-room, leaving Caroline and Mab alone to follow their own devices. Now was the moment for speaking to her sister, Mabel decided; and, however much she shrank from her task, she was resolute.

"What shall we do this morning?" asked Caroline, with careless ease, glancing out at the roses. "Would you like to play those duets with me first? And then we can read in the garden."

"The duets? Oh, no, dear Caroline! I must speak to you, please," said Mabel.

"Dear me, Mab, what grave thing can you have to say? You look as if you were about to make your will! Is it anything serious?"

"Very, very serious," faltered the girl.

"Well, out with it! I suppose it will not take long in the telling; and it is a shame to pass this lovely morning indoors."

"We had better go up-stairs, where we cannot be overheard," said Mab tremulously.

"Really? Then there is something of mystery at the bottom of this private conference. Come on then! I like mysteries—they are so exciting;" and, humming a tune as she went, Caroline ran lightly up-stairs.

But Mab's face was tearful and pleading when she closed the door of their sitting-room, and she sank upon her knees beside her sister.

"Caroline," she gasped out, "you will be shocked and pained, but it is my duty to tell you! You have been deceived."

"What do you mean?" asked the other, turning somewhat pale.

"I mean—I mean," faltered Mab, "that the night before last Dick asked me to run down to the pool and fetch a box of flies which he had left there, and which belongs to uncle; and, as there was no opportunity to go before bed-time, I went after he had said good night to uncle John. When I got to the boat-house, I—I saw—— Oh, dear Caroline, you can guess what is coming, can't you?"

"No, indeed I can't, Mab," her sister answered, in a cold hard tone. "Pray explain yourself."

"What—you cannot guess what I saw?" cried Mabel, in a thrilling voice. "You do not know? I saw a man, Caroline, and I saw you—you!"

"Me?" said Caroline, in a perfectly natural tone of surprise. "What can you mean, Mab? I had gone to bed!"

"Caroline, do you suppose I could make a mistake in your identity—that I do not know your voice, your figure? Why, I was not two paces from you! Oh, don't be afraid to trust me, dear, for I only wish you to be happy, and not to be cruelly deceived! And before you came down to the boat-house, when I was afraid to move out of the shadow for fear of being seen myself by that man, I caught the words he was muttering to himself about you; and he is only pretending to feel adoration for you just for his own ends. He said ——"

But here Caroline interrupted her haughtily.

"Have you taken leave of your senses, Mabel? Do you understand what you are accusing me of—me—your elder sister? How dare you say such a thing! Take care, or I shall complain to my uncle!"

Mab sprang up from her kneeling posture, facing Caroline with resolution.

"Oh, Caroline, you cannot mean to deny it!"

"To deny what?" asked the elder girl.

"That you were in the boat-house with that stranger—that you talked with him—that you spoke to him as if you were affianced to him—that you promised to take something to London for him whilst he was abroad—that he spoke of coming to ask your hand of father, but not until his own hands were full of gold;" and, out of breath with haste and painful emotion, Mabel paused, looking entreatingly at her sister.

But Caroline drew herself up with a disdainful air.

"I tell you what it is, Mab," she said; "you will get yourself into trouble some day—real trouble—if you go running out at night when you are supposed to be in bed, in order to do Dick's errands. What would uncle John say if he knew it? If you presume to say another word about me in connection with this absurd story, I shall tell him what has occurred. Be good enough to ascertain the truth of a matter before you run away with a ridiculous tale about your own sister."

"Oh, Caroline, Caroline!" was all Mab could utter.

"You will listen to me now, if you please," said Caroline, with a proud gesture. "I shall not detain you long, I promise you. I have no doubt whatever that you did actually see some man and some woman down by the boat-house on the night before last, and that in your fright and excitement—and you become more and more excitable every day—you connected the woman with me from some fancied resemblance."

"It was no fancy!" cried Mab. "I heard your voice! The man spoke to you by name."

"You will listen without interrupting me, if you please," rejoined her sister, in frigid tones, "and then you can take your own course, and also the consequences, which will hardly be pleasant, I assure you. I will conclude what I had to say. It is

possible that you saw two persons by the boat-house—quite possible too that the woman was spoken to as 'Caroline'—it is not an uncommon name—and that something about her reminded you in the half-darkness, of me; but, if you will persist in asserting that I was there—that I was talking at that hour to some unknown man—I will go to my uncle, and ask him to protect me from such asseverations. You and Dick had better understand that at once. It was extremely wrong of him to ask you to go out to repair his mistake, and it was still more unwise of you to consent. After bidding uncle John and me good night, and leading us both to suppose that you were safe in your own room, you creep down-stairs, and go on one knows where, exposing yourself to all sorts of dangers! No wonder you imagined all kinds of things with your mind in a state of excitement. And now I shall leave you, for I prefer my own society to yours. I only wish my father would consent to send you to school to finish your education; it would be much safer with a girl of your temperament;" and with cool contempt Caroline gathered up her art-needlework, and prepared to leave the room.

Mab rushed after her.

"Then you deny it," she gasped—"you deny it all?"

Caroline gave her a look of supreme disdain, but would not answer, and unhappy Mabel was left alone.

Overwhelmed at the turn things had taken, she sank down upon a seat, buried her face in her hands, and tried to think calmly. Could she have been mistaken? Oh, how glad would she be to believe so! But she could not persuade herself that it was not Caroline who had been in the boat-house with the stranger. Too well she had recognised her sister's voice! And Caroline denied it, and threatened to inform her uncle; and she was in earnest as it was plain to perceive.

All at once Mabel burst into bitter tears, feeling cut to the heart. Her own sister to tell such a falsehood, to turn against her, against Dick!

There had never been much affection shown to Mabel by her eldest sister, but hitherto they had trusted each other. If kindness was lacking, at least Caroline had been silent to her uncle and her father about any of Mab's short-comings. But now it would not be so; she had threatened to tell her uncle about Dick's doings and she had persisted in a base falsehood to screen her own wrong-doing. Mab decided that it was useless to go in search of Dick—uncle John would be sure to keep him employed till luncheon-time; and she had no heart to go out of doors into the lovely summer noontide, where birds were carolling their blithest, and long shafts of golden light fell athwart the trees and flowers.

She was so absorbed in her grief that she did not heed the flight of time, and she was startled by hearing the gong sound for the mid-day meal. Not to be ready for that would certainly bring down upon her uncle John's displeasure, so she flew to her room, smoothed her hair, bathed her face, and hastened down-stairs.

She was just in time. A visitor was in the drawing-room—an elderly gentleman, a neighbor of uncle John's. Caroline was very sweet in her manner, very attentive to him, and listened with an engaging air of interest to an anecdote that her uncle was telling.

When the meal was over, Caroline agreed to drive with her uncle and Dick; but Mabel said she would rather sit in the garden. To her surprise, uncle John allowed her to have her own way; and she saw them all go off about half-past three o'clock in the barouche. Not a word had Caroline addressed to her since they had parted in the morning; nor had she deigned to look at her.

Poor Mab! She was so young so surrounded by impending troubles, and she had no counsellor but Dick. To him she had only time to whisper a sentence or two.

"Oh, Dick, Caroline denies it all, and threatens to tell uncle! She insists that I made a mistake; but it was no mistake."

Dick had given her a troubled look full of sympathy, but had not been able to speak, for the others were within hearing; and as she sat under a thorn-tree on the lawn after they had driven away, she brooded sadly over what had happened.

Oblivious of outer impressions, she did not notice that a carriage in which were seated an elegantly-dressed lady and a tall handsome man, who was driving, had turned into the park, and was now near the house.

But the noise of the house-bell sounding over the lawn and grinding of wheels upon the gravel caused Mabel to become aware that visitors had called at her uncle's.

"What a good thing that I am not 'out' yet," she thought, "for I have no heart to see visitors!"

But, lest these should discover her, she left her shady seat beneath the thorn-tree, and sheltered by the bushes, gained the sweep of greensward where stood the summer-house for ever memorable in Mab's eyes.

"What a hero he would have been in olden times!" said the girl to herself, thinking of Lord Wynmore, whilst a glow came to her cheeks and her eyes brightened, notwithstanding her despondency. "Oh, I hope that I shall have a little talk to him again before we go home! What a pity that no one but Dick must ever know how good he was to me!"

She sat down on a garden-seat, waiting till she should hear the carriage roll away; and soon she caught the expected sound. Then, rising mechanically, she made her way again towards the thorn-tree.

But she had not gone many paces when she heard her name pronounced behind her; and, turning in surprise, she came face to face with Lord Wynmore himself.

"How do you do, Miss Charlford? Will you forgive me for entering by the green gate?" he said, shaking hands.

Mabel felt as if she could readily forgive him anything, but she only said, with a charming blush—

"I did not know whose carriage it was, and so I got out of sight, for my uncle and sister are out."

"And you will pardon me for coming upon you like this?" he went on holding her hand for a moment. "I am afraid I have presumed on our informal introduction in my anxiety to introduce you to my sister, who arrived unexpectedly last night, and threatens to remain with me only eight days, as she is going abroad. We are to hasten our fete; hence this visit to beg you to grace it with your presence as you promised;" and he looked anxiously into Mabel's eyes for her answer.

"Oh, I shall be most pleased to come," she exclaimed, "if uncle John permits it!"

"We must manage to persuade him. But did he not promise? Without you there, I should feel as if I cared nothing for the fete;" and Lord Wynmore spoke these last words in a tone which any girl so young as Mable have been sure to remember.

"But there sits my sister, waiting to make your acquaintance," added he. "May I bring her in here?"

"Your sister? Has she been waiting all this time? How rude I must seem!" cried Mabel, raising her eyes and perceiving that the carriage had been drawn up at the roadside, and that a groom in faultless livery was at the horses' heads. In another moment she was faltering out her excuses to a fashionably-attired lady very like Lord Wynmore, but a year or two older.

"My uncle and sister will be at home in another quarter of an hour—perhaps sooner," said the girl. "Do stay and see them. Besides, it is too warm to drive back to the Manor without tea."

"What a very sweet smile she has, and what a lovely girl she is!" thought the lady. "But my brother must take care what he is doing."

Why he was to "take care" was not very clear, as, even if he did here after propose for Mabel's hand, it would be no mesalliance. Her father was a wealthy man—a country gentleman; she would be by no means a portionless bride. She was beautiful, well-born, cultured; why should he not marry her if he and she learned to love each other?

But Lady Effington did not reason thus; on the contrary, she thought in this fashion—

"Neville might wed any girl short of a princess; why should he choose for a bride the younger daughter of squire? However, she is still so young that their acquaintanceship counts for nothing; and fortunately she does not live here, and he is often away."

It had not taken many moments for these thoughts to fly through Lady Effington's mind and meanwhile she was smiling most amiably on Mabel, who accompanied by Lord Wynmore, was leading the way to the thorn-tree.

Soon they were all seated in the shade; and in a minute or two a footman brought out tea and strawberries; then Mabel had to turn hostess for the first time in her life.

"What a pretty view you have from this lawn, Miss Charlford!" said Lady Effington. "Neville"—turning to her brother—"I think it is quite as beautiful as your boasted view from the terrace at the Manor."

"You shall tell me which you prefer when you have made acquaintance with the Manor," he remarked, smiling at Mabel, who blushed because she was thinking—

"'Neville'—what a pretty name! 'Neville Wynmore'—it is uncommon, and suits him well."

Then Lady Effington began to talk of the projected fete.

"It is to be a large gathering, we hope," she said; "and my brother intends to illuminate his grounds, and to throw a flood light over the lake, as he means to have musicians—seated in boats with colored awnings—on the water. They are to play plaintive pathetic airs; and there are to be lady vocalists too, who will sing ballads. Don't you think it will be something a little original, Miss Charlford?"

"Oh, yes—and most delightful!" cried Mab, with genuine warmth and pleasure.

"Still it is a bold venture," continued Lady Effington: "but then my brother is courageous, and is prepared to face his neighbors' smiles if his attempt is unsuccessful. You won't betray him, I know, so I will confess to you at what he is aiming. He intends to make his little lake resemble in some measure Lago Maggiore, so he will have boats with colored awnings, and the men in them habited like Italian boatmen; while a purple light is to be thrown upon the hills which slope behind it, and which are really very picturesque."

"It sounds charming!" exclaimed Mabel, carried away by the mental picture she formed from Lady Effington's description.

"But it is very ambitious," remarked the elder lady.

"I hope it is not being ambitious to give a ballad concert on the lake and to light up the water at a summer entertainment in fine weather," rejoined Lord Wynmore, again smiling at Mabel.

"No; it is the imitation of Lago Maggiore that is ambitious, Neville. However, we will hope for a clear sky and a successful effect. Besides, we shall not be by the lake all the evening; there will be the banquet before the concert, and dancing afterwards."

"And I may make sure of one dance, may I not, Miss Charlford?" interposed Lord Wynmore.

Mabel had barely time to murmur her assent, when her uncle's carriage drove up.

Uncle John approached his visitors with smiles of welcome on his usually cross face; nor did Caroline allow any trace of her anger against her sister to appear.

Indeed, on this occasion, Mr. John Charlford was quite gracious, and readily promised to accompany his nieces and nephew to the garden party.

"We hope our friends will excuse the short notice we give them—only a week—but my sister is in haste to join her husband, who is in Norway," said Lord Wynmore.

What a harmonious party it seemed, gathered around the rustic tea-table under the thorn-tree. No one could have guessed in listening to Mr. Charlford's cordial voice when he addressed his guests—and now and then his nieces—how unpleasant his tone and manner could often be. But now all went smoothly; the volcano of ill-temper slumbered, for there was nothing to awaken it.

By-and-by he asked Lady Effington if she would like to take a stroll in the grounds; and Lord Wynmore followed with Mabel.

Caroline and Dick were just in front, but still Lord Wynmore contrived to say a word in private to his fair young companion.

"Does all go well with respect to your brother's fishing, Miss Charlford?"—this in a low tone, with a smile.

"Yes, thank you," she answered, with a shy glance full of gratitude.

"And he will be careful to take his tackle in future?"

"You may be sure he will."

What a few words to set Mab's heart beating wildly! But so it was; and, moreover, the courted, flattered, handsome young nobleman was conscious that his own heart throbbed tumultuously when Mab looked up at him and smiled.

Then Caroline and Dick lingered in order to allow the other two to join them, and they were soon all talking gaily together except Mab, who was content to listen.

Even when the visitors had departed, uncle John's good humor did not vanish. He called Mabel to take a turn with him up and down the terrace, and asked her questions about their visitors—how long they had been there before his return, how she had managed to entertain them, etc. Then Mabel told her uncle about the programme for the fete, and the concert on the water.

Mr. Charlford smiled, nodded approval once or twice, and then inquired if Mabel wanted a new dress for the garden-party.

"I think I have all I want, thank you, uncle," the girl replied.

But here Caroline interposed.

"Uncle," she said, "I am sure you would not like Mabel to wear anything but a new dress on such an occasion; and she has nothing but a washing-silk that has been worn a dozen times, which is not at all the thing for a fete at the Manor. When a girl is not 'out' she has not a new evening costume always ready, so Mabel must get one at once, and I had better go to London and choose it for her."

"Yes, that will be the best way, Caroline," replied Mr. Charlford; "and you will know what is suitable. Better go to-morrow."

"I will, uncle," replied Caroline suavely.

"She has made my dress an excuse to go to London to do that man's bidding," thought Mabel, trembling as she heard her sister's words. "Indeed, indeed, I do not want a new dress, Caroline," she cried aloud. "I have not been introduced to society yet, so that I shall not be expected to be so carefully dressed. I would rather wear the one I have."

"How very extraordinary!" exclaimed her uncle, in genuine wonder. "Why, Mabel, you use a tone of actual entreaty when you beg that you may not have a new costume for this fete. Any other girl would be delighted at the offer. I cannot understand you."

"Nor I either, uncle," said Caroline serenely. "However, I know what my father would desire—that we should go well-dressed or remain at home; and in this case I think he would wish us to accompany you."

"Certainly," said uncle John, with some displeasure, glancing at Mabel, who remained silent.

Poor Mabel—little did she dream in what manner hereafter such a trifling circumstance would be used against her!

Seeing that opposition to Caroline's arrangement would be useless, she said no more; and soon afterwards the dressing-bell rang.

"Who will go with us to London to-morrow, Caroline?" asked Mabel, as they went up-stairs.

"'With us?' My maid of course will go," replied her sister coldly; "but there can be no necessity for you to make the journey, as the costume is to be left to my taste. Nor do I desire your society. Remember, you have not yet asked my pardon for your strange accusations."

"How can I, Caroline," faltered Mab, with tears in her eyes, "when I know that it was you whom I saw?"

"What! You persist in that story?" cried Caroline, her eyes aflame.

"It was dreadful to me to think that it was true," murmured Mabel; "and why should I wish to accuse you, Caroline? Oh, don't be afraid to trust me!"

"Hush!" said Caroline, with an imperious gesture. "You deserve little consideration from me. But you are so wretchedly inexperienced that I am willing to help your future, even though you have behaved so badly to me. Till this fete is over I will be silent about what has occurred; after that you will have to alter your behavior."

And without another word she swept past Mabel, and closed the door of her room.

"I cannot say that I think I made a mistake. I am sure that it was she and no other in the boat-house," murmured Mab to herself, forgetting in her distress that the time was flying.

The result was that she was not quite ready when the dinner-bell rang—a great offence in her uncle's eyes. He looked at her severely without speaking as she entered the drawing-room, then gave his arm to Caroline, and they filed in to dinner.

CHAPTER IX.

THE next day, when Caroline, with triumph in her eyes, had gone up to town, Mab and her brother felt that, as uncle John had to meet his man of business, which would occupy him a large part of the day, they would have unwonted freedom from restraint, and could do what they liked and go where they pleased.

"Isn't this delightful, Mab?" said Dick, throwing his cap into the air with boyish pleasure, as he and she watched uncle John out of sight, and realized that they could do just as they chose for several hours to come.

"It would be heavenly," replied Mab, "if I could forget about Caroline. But, oh, Dick, I am certain that she has gone to London on the stranger's business. She still denies everything—isn't that terrible?"

"Yes, it's pretty bad, telling a downright falsehood like that, and persisting in it," said Dick. "But she's not going to her own destruction blindfolded if I can save her. She may take a high hand now, but, if the worst comes to the worst, I must watch her, and tell my father the truth—only in case of extremity, however, to prevent her from going off and marrying the fellow secretly. At present he is out of England, so that taking this package for him to its address will not lead to much harm, I hope. But, Mab, is it possible that after all you did make a mistake?"

"It is not possible," she answered with emphasis.

"You are absolutely sure that it was Caroline herself who was talking to this stranger?"

"Absolutely," asseverated Mab. "Oh, Dick, would you make a mistake about me if you saw me by chance in the same manner that I saw Caroline, or do you suppose that I should mistake you for some other person? Wouldn't it be out of the question altogether?"

Thus appealed to, Dick declared that Mab's argument was conclusive; and the young fellow sat for some minutes, his face buried in his hands, overwhelmed with the sad conviction that his elder sister was deceiving them all, and that she had some unhappy underhand love affair which could bring nothing but disappointment.

"Dear Dick," said Mab presently, "you think as seriously then of this as I do? Oh, what can we say to Caroline to convince her of the danger she is in?"

"I don't know yet, Mab; I'll think about it," answered Dick, rising with a suppressed sigh. "Let us go down to the pool now, Mab, and have a row," he added. "There we shall be all to ourselves. I'll pull you under the old willow tree on the other side of the water, and we'll have a few hours' pleasant idleness, at any rate."

"It will be delightful!" cried the girl, forgetting for the moment her troubles about Caroline and uncle John, and the dark secret concerning her father which she had tried to grasp and the effort wounded her peace so sorely.

Never indeed from that moment had she had any rest; something or other had continually occurred to disturb her life since the day, still so short a time ago, when she had darted into the library at home, and secreted herself behind the sheltering curtain in order to secure a favorite book.

It was a lovely summer day. A faint mist lay over the hills, which were blue as the sea in the distance, whilst the rich foliage of the trees cast cool shadows over the thick grass and clover and upon the water sparkling in the sunlight.

"It will be first-rate under the old willow, Mab," said Dick, breaking the silence, and striving to make Mab believe that he was thinking of nothing but the pleasure of an idle hour in the boat. But he could not get Mab's story out of his mind; the more he dwelt upon it the more extraordinary it appeared to him. It was clear that his father had something which he wished to hide from every one; and it seemed dreadful to Dick, who had always been accustomed to regard his name as an honorable one, and to hold his head high, to think that some day—soon perhaps—disgrace might centre around the Charlfords. He took care, however, not to give utterance to his thoughts to Mab. She had had enough to try her lately, poor girl. And so he smiled, saying as he glanced around at her, "Well, Mab, who knows what the gods may have in store for you, after all? Suppose some day that you were to turn into a great lady?"

"What do you mean Dick?" she asked, though she knew very well what he meant, and a rosy flush overspread her fair young face.

Dick laughed lightly.

"Mean? I mean nothing, except that I might some day address your letters as 'Lady So-and-so.' Stranger things than that have happened."

"You are really ridiculous, Dick," she cried, flushing again; "and, if you do not promise to talk sensibly, I shall not go on the pool."

"Very well—I will talk nothing but sense then," he rejoined. "Let us speak of pleasant things however—the fete at the Manor, for instance. Mind you make yourself look nice, Mab, for you were the means of inducing the owner of the Manor to send us the invitation. Say what you like—you know you were!"

"Perhaps. You see he pitied me, Dick, and so tried to be kind. I am so glad we are going to the fete."

"Let us pray for fine weather. We sha'n't have long to wait," said Dick with a laugh.

They walked on through the rich grass down to the pool, Mab's heart beating all the while in an unwonted manner at Dick's allusion to Lord Wynmore. Yes, he had been very kind, and had shown delicate discretion and happy tact. All her life she would remember their first meeting and his last hand-clasp. Never, never would she forget him, though of course he would speedily forget her. Well, that she must expect—she, a girl still in the schoolroom.

She wondered how old he was, and formed a silent resolution to ascertain by searching in a Peerage which lay conspicuously on uncle John's writing-table; and Mab's heart thrilled anew as she came to this decision. The girl little suspected that her warm interest in her hero was fast being converted into love.

"Here we are!" exclaimed Dick, as he unmoored the boat, after having arranged the cushions for Mab.

"Oh, Dick, I almost wish we had not come after all!" she remarked, in a troubled tone. "It makes me think so much of what I saw here that night!"

"Nonsense! You are a sensible girl, Mab, and must not let a thing of that sort master you," returned Dick resolutely. "Whatever is the explanation of it, the wrong—if there is wrong—is none of your doing nor of mine, so we will enjoy this hour or two together."

Mab said no more, but stepped into the boat, resolved not to spoil Dick's pleasure by any allusion to what had happened so recently.

She had taken counsel with him; they had determined on their courage of action when their father should return; till then it was in every way to be silent.

And so, having settled herself in the boat, Mab gave a soft sigh, and then tried to assume an air of careless ease.

Dick too, bent on practising the same amiable deception, looked and laughed at his sister as he pulled out into the middle of the stream.

The rippling water, the perfume coming to them faintly from the not distant flower-garden, the pleasant summer sounds which filled the air, the bright sunlight, the shadows cast by the trees over the pool, the sense of freedom from restraint, all contributed to soothe Mab into a dream from which Lord Wynmore certainly was not absent.

Dick was leaning on his sculls, looking into the water, his sleeves rolled above his elbows, his little craft floating idly on the wavelets. He also was dreaming, but in very troubled fashion.

"Hallo, what's that, Mab?" he cried suddenly; and, sitting bolt-upright in a moment, he pointed sideways to where Mab sat; and, her glance following his indication, she saw an envelope lying under the seat.

In an instant she had bent forward and seized and opened it with trembling fingers.

"What is it, Mab?" asked Dick eagerly.

"A photograph! Nothing else I think," she said, in a somewhat unsteady voice, for she had been so shaken by past occurrences that she was prepared for anything disastrous.

Dick soon had the envelope in his hand, and was gazing at the photograph which Mab had drawn forth—that of a dark, middle-aged, handsome, evil-looking man dressed in somewhat foreign fashion.

"Who is he, I wonder?" said Dick.

"That man! Depend on it, it is he!" cried Mabel.

Dick sat staring at the photograph as if the sight stupefied him—as if Mab's supposition were a certainty.

"How did it come there?" he muttered presently.

"Who is to tell?" said Mab. "Perhaps Caroline and that dreadful man were sitting in the boat on the night before. Perhaps she met him again the next morning. Who is to know?" Then, with a sudden change of tone and a blush—"Or perhaps Lord Wynmore dropped it when we went on the pool? It might be so, Dick."

"Yes, it might, answered Dick abstractedly.

He dipped his sculls into the water, and with clouded face pulled for the old willow. He and Mabel were both silent, absorbed by their conjectures as to what the photograph might reveal.

Neither of them uttered a syllable as the boat quietly floated on till it came to a stand-still near the pleasant shadow cast by the old willow over the stream. Then Dick spoke.

"Mab somehow I feel certain that we are all involved in some terrible affair. I wish I could believe that that photograph belonged to Lord Wynmore; but I do not think it is his."

"We can ask him," faltered Mab.

"Let me look at it again!" cried Dick, taking it hurriedly from his sister's outstretched hand.

As he did so, he saw that there was a small square piece of paper within the envelope. He drew it out, examining it carefully.

"There are two or three words on it, are there not, Dick?" said Mab, her breath coming faster.

"Read!" he exclaimed, holding it up to view.

The sunlight was so dazzling that Mab had to take the morsel of paper in her fingers and shade it before she deciphered four names, written one under the other in very small but plain characters.

The names she read were these—"Branley," "Joyne," "Froyle," "Bushel."

Underneath was traced in faint large letters, as if in place of a signature—

"Revenge, if not Success!"

"How very strange. Have you seen the words underneath?" asked Mab, looking up with terror in her eyes.

No, Dick had not seen them in his first hasty glance at the names on the slip of paper; and his brow darkened as he now scanned the mysterious words.

"I don't know what it can mean," said Mab.

Perhaps a minute went by before he answered her, and then his thoughts were evidently far astray.

"Don't speak to me yet, Mab," he said, as she was faltering out some new conjecture; "I want to think—I want to think."

Dick's silence would soon be broken—she felt that as she sat watching him with anxious eyes.

She was right enough in her surmise. Presently he broke out, in tones which startled her—

"Mab, what I mean to do is this—I will take that photograph in my hand, and suddenly showing it to Caroline, watch her narrowly. Surely she will betray some agitation if it is the likeness of the wretch who is deceiving her. And then I will appeal to her sense of right and honor."

Mab pressed his hand in assent, but could not speak lest tears should overflow; and Dick continued—

"The moment my father returns—that very evening, I mean—you and I will go to him, and tell him that you saw him here at uncle John's when every one supposed him to be in Germany."

Mab nodded in agreement.

How was it that neither of them glanced behind into the meadow? How was it they believed themselves so secure from interruption on the pool?

Surely, when they spoke on such a theme, they should have remembered even remote possibilities. Neither of them did, however—neither of them cast a thought beyond the exciting subject of their discourse. Secure in the absence of uncle John, removed from passers-by, here, out on the water, they spoke freely, Dick's tones rising as he went on.

"If there is a secret, Mab, a cruel terrible one, something which would overshadow our lives if it were known, we ought either to have been told it from the first, so that we might never expect to walk on an equal footing with others who have nothing to conceal, or it ought to have been hidden more securely—hidden forever."

"Yes, yes; that is how I feel!" cried Mab, sobbing. "But perhaps, dear Dick, it is not so bad as you think. Father may be able to explain things. We have not asked him yet."

"If he cannot, I shall leave home—I will go abroad. How can I consort with fellows of my own rank, when a secret darkens our name?"

"Don't—oh, don't talk so, Dick," cried Mab beseechingly.

"Not talk so," he echoed—and his words sounded far over the meadow bank in the quiet of the summer morning—"not talk so? It is impossible to say or feel otherwise. What am I to think when my own father gives out that he is going to leave home for a month"—here Dick's tone grew still more bitter and incisive—"then thirty-six hours afterwards he is seen by his own daughter skulking about as if dreading to be detected, in conference with a man who is evidently a designing wretch? Is there no disgraceful thing under that? I tell you there must be."

Poor Mab's heart, sinking within her, left her no power to reply. Her brother, now thoroughly roused to a sense of coming evil, felt that he could not rest till he had dragged the thing he dreaded into view, and thus could give battle to it. Now it eluded him, taking a darker form from its vagueness.

"It is dreadful to live another hour like this," exclaimed Dick, after the lapse of a moment or two. "Mab," he added, "tell me again from the beginning how things went that night—about my father, I mean—not about Caroline. I want to judge calmly."

"I got down to the boat-house, you know," she said tremulously, "and before I could do what you wished I heard voices—voices inside the building. Then I was so terrified that I could not move, because I heard father's voice."

"Can you tell me the exact words you overheard?" interrupted Dick.

"Oh, yes—easily, for I cannot forget them. Shall I ever forget them as long as I live?" she exclaimed. "That man said to father, 'I tell you what it is, Charlford;' and then father interrupted him, crying 'Are you mad, addressing me by that name? I am Filton to you and to everybody until I take up my ordinary life again.'"

"Go on—go on," urged Dick, as she paused.

"'Filton or Charlford, it doesn't matter—the moon and the beetles are our only listeners. But we have settled our business,' the man answered; and he laughed disagreeably, adding that the boat-house made a capital rendezvous. 'Good-night, Filton; we part here, I suppose,' he said. Then father replied, 'Certainly,' and that the morning would see him a long way off. After this, I was prepared for whatever might happen, and crouched against the boat-house in a sort of fright. Presently father come out, passing close to me, and crept away like a thief in the night, keeping in the dark parts of the field, for the moon had risen, as if he dared not be seen. Oh, Dick, I did not dare to run after him, and cling to him, and say, 'Father, tell me why you are here like this?' Isn't it sad and miserable that we are all so afraid of him?"

"Sad! Ah, Mab, how is all this going to end?" said Dick sorrowfully.

They forgot in their absorption how the time flew, they forgot to look behind them into the grassy meadow where stood the old willow which shaded them, its branches bending far over the pool.

Still the young brother and sister talked on about the dark secret which they were each persuaded existed, asking each other what it could be, telling each other how strange it was that their father should have come down to the boat-house that night, how mysterious his conduct was, how wretched they felt about it.

It was only of their father that they spoke—they did not mention Caroline. Just now she was not so present to their minds, for, sad as her conduct was, she could be saved—by force, if not by persuasion.

Caroline had been blinded by an unworthy attachment—a hidden one too; but they could understand the reason for the concealment. Far otherwise was it concerning the mystery which was connected with their father.

The troubled and youthful pair discussed his conduct in all its bearings, never giving a thought to the narrow patch of briar and bush separating them from the meadow. Why had they not remembered it? Why had they brought their boat so near the bank?

They talked on, revealing to a listener behind the bushes what they would almost have died to conceal.

Cautiously that hidden eavesdropper crawled nearer over the soft long grass, and then lay prone and silent, like a serpent on the watch for prey; and, as he listened, Dick's excited comments and Mab's pathetic tones falling upon his ear, a strange smile contorted his face and his eyes glittered maliciously. Twice his right hand was clenched tightly; twice some mockery of mirth made his features look frightful.

He was now quite close to the edge of the pool, able to distinguish every syllable which was spoken by the young pair in the boat resting under the willows.

Was it the growing heat of the day which sent so livid a pallor over the features? Eagerly he listened for any other revelation which might be made by the unthinking couple so near him. But he had heard enough, and he had taken his resolve.

There was a footpath running through the meadow, but it was many yards distant, and Mab and Dick had now and then sent a glance in its direction; but no one had passed along it since they had drawn up their boat under the old willow. How were they to imagine that there was an enemy so near them?

"Mab," said Dick suddenly, "I never was so upset in my life! I don't know how I shall manage to hide my suspicions from uncle John. Oh, how I long to ask father straight out what it all means!"

"It is a fearful thing to have to do, but we must do it," rejoined Mab. "And I am sure it will be wise not to breathe a word of it to Caroline; you don't know what she might do; and she would not believe us."

"I wonder if uncle John himself knows that my father came here that night," remmed Dick. "I incline to think he does."

"And I too," said Mab.

"Whether he knows it or not," remarked Dick passionately, "I will not confer with him about it. I will go straight to my father. You agree, don't you, Mab?"

"Certainly, Dick. It is father we ought to ask, not uncle John. If we went to him he would of course answer. He is the very last person to go to in our trouble—yes, the very last," repeated Mab. "Hush! Did you heard anything?" she asked anxiously.

"Yes; it was nothing but that brown cow switching her tail. No one has been into the meadow since we came here," returned Dick unconcernedly. "Of course we are in security here, or I should not have spoken as I have. Well, I suppose we must go to the house. It is awfully late; but no one will be at luncheon except ourselves."

"Oh, I hope not!" she cried. "I feel as if I could not talk to any stranger to-day. Besides, I wish I had not to go into the house again. I wish we could live out of doors, away from uncle John."

"So do I. He is so thoroughly disagreeable!" said Dick. "Now then, Mab, are you ready to steer?"

"In one minute, Dick," she answered, seeking with nervous fingers for the cord.

At that moment she chanced to glance at the stem of the willow-tree, along which a shadow fell, and Dick, regarding her, perceived her lovely eyes grow wild with sudden terror.

What had happened? He turned round sharply to ascertain, and almost close to the boat, his cold pitiless eyes fixed upon them, a mocking smile about his hard pale lips, stood no other than he whom they both looked upon more as an enemy than as a protector—uncle John!

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Bric-a-Brac.

An Important Invention.—A farmer sent half a dollar for a lightning potato bug killer, which he saw advertised in a paper, and received in return two blocks of wood, with directions printed on them as follows: "Take this block, which is No. 1, in the right hand; place the bug on No. 2, and press them together. Remove the bug and proceed as before."

Oranges.—There are many oranges of curious shape and flavor we seldom or never see in this country. Such are the pear-shaped kind grown in the far East; the orange of the Philippines, which is no larger than a good-sized cherry; the double orange, in which two perfect oranges appear, one within the other; and the fingered citron of China. It is very large, and is placed on the table by the Celestials rather for its exquisite fragrance than for its flavor.

Roman Soldiers.—It was considered very honorable to be a soldier in ancient Rome—much more honorable than to be a mechanic or laborer. Every soldier took a most solemn oath, which was called a "sacrament." He swore never to desert his standard, to submit his own will to the command of his leader, and to sacrifice his life for the empire. The soldiers were well-paid, but very strictly disciplined.

The Feet.—Coverings for the foot began with sandals. After these came shoes left open at the toes, then the wooden shoes of the ninth and tenth centuries, followed in the Middle Ages by shoes with long pointed and turned-up toes, which sometimes turned up as high as the knee. Later a shoe was worn with an exceedingly wide toe—so very wide that it impeded the process of walking. Queen Mary restricted the wearing of this by a proclamation which ran to the effect that shoes should not be worn wider than six inches.

A Strange Experiment.—King James IV. of Scotland is said to have ordered an experiment to be carried out which must be regarded as one of the strangest ever recorded. With a view to learn what was the original human language, he had a dumb woman lodged on the Isle of Inchkeith, in the Frith of Forth, and two infants entrusted to her care. Oddly enough, the result was considered satisfactory, for in due course it was found that they spoke "very good Hebrew!"

Killed by Forks.—The unhealthiest occupation in the world is that of a cutler; and among cutlers, those who grind and polish forks have the worst time. The disease that cutlers usually die with is known as "grinders' rot." The lungs are found after death to be quite black as though they had been dipped in ink, and the lung texture, which ought to be like a sponge, is like a piece of india rubber. This is due to the fine dust from the steel and whetstone. The average age of fork-grinders is 29 years.

Ancestral Worship.—Ancestral worship is the most formidable enemy missionaries have to encounter in China. The man who becomes a Christian, abandons in the eyes of his fellow-countrymen, his forefathers for hundreds of years to misery in the world beyond this life. No funeral money is burnt for them, they are destitute of even articles of clothing, and they revenge themselves not on the erring descendant, but the country at large. Therefore the Chinaman who becomes a Christian has to face not merely the hostility of his own family, but of all the neighborhood.

Sugar Among the Ancients.—It seems almost impossible to imagine life without sugar, so absolutely essential is its use to the comfort of living. There is no mention of sugar among the early Greeks and Romans, although sugar or "sweet" cane was made known by the conquests of Alexander the Great, whose admiral, Nearchus, found it in the East Indies. It is mentioned as a remedial agent a few years before the birth of Christ—"a honey called saccharon, having the appearance of salt." It is known, also, that Galen often prescribed it as a medicine. The juice of the sugar-cane was used by some of the oriental nations as an intoxicating drink.

Bernadotte's Secret.—Bernadotte, the founder of the present royal house of Sweden, never would submit to be bled, although the lancet was in his time in constant use by physicians. One day he suffered so much from feverishness that his medical attendant insisted on his being bled. The king had to give in, as he was told his life might be in danger. But before the operation the king made every attendant retire, and told the doctor he must swear never to tell what he saw upon his arm. The doctor having promised, the king drew up his shirt-sleeve, and upon his arm was seen a Phrygian cap of liberty, with the device "Death to Kings!" Only after his death was this record of Bernadotte's early democratic days revealed.

Obadiah Vincent, who lives near Mattoon, Ill., was born in Kentucky in 1767. His form is bent almost double. Two years ago he lost his eyesight. Until a few years ago he had been able to do a fair day's work, but now he is a pauper.

REST.

Where shall we find the best
That earth can give of rest?
Is it when weary work at length is done,
When dewy evening veileth earth and sky,
Or when some distant goal is nobly won,
The laurel wreath put on that will not die?

Nay; this is not the best
That earth can give of rest!
Have we not found it in some lonely dim,
Hallowed and silent from the thronging street,
Where, through an incense cloud, the choral hymn
Bears the worn spirit to God's holy feet?

Nay; this is not the best
That earth can give of rest!
When—wearied with sore travel in the night—
The darkness sudden breaks, and round us, shed
From the clear golden heavens, the morning light,
Fragrant and fair, shows all our travail fled?

Nay; this is not the best
That earth can give of rest!
Then is it when we look upon the face
Of some one best beloved, whose heart and life
Are knit to ours, and in their dear embrace
Forget the world is full of care and strife?

Nay; this is not the best
That earth can give of rest!
Then is it found when the hot heart grows calm,
The quick brain slow beneath the touch of Age,
When saddest memories breathe only balm,
And the tamed spirit frets not in her cage?

FOR LOVE OF HER.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "LIKE UNTO A STAR," "BRUNA'S STORY," "A GIRL'S DESPAIR," "TWICE MARRIED," ETC., ETC.

CHAPTER XXXVII—(CONTINUED.)

SHE did not seem to heed the displeasure in his voice, the stern look with which he regarded her, or that he offered her no other greeting but those chill spoken words.

She could think of nothing but her husband's danger.

"May I go to him?" she said, with almost feverish excitement.

"Not yet," Doctor Kinsley said, in the same chill tone of displeasure. "The least agitation would be fatal to him, and the sight of you thus could not fail to agitate him. Millie"—his voice changed as he addressed Miss Harrison—"will you take Lady Dereham upstairs, and let her rest and change her gown?"

"May I not see him?" Maud said pitifully. "I am quite calm. Look at my hand, it is quite steady. Papa, let me see him, let me see him!"

"Having waited so long, you can wait a few hours longer," Doctor Kinsley said coldly. "Have you no explanation to give for your strange and most reprehensible conduct?"

"I wrote," she muttered, clasping her hands so tightly together that she bruised her delicate fingers.

"You—you wrote?" he slowly repeated. "When?"

"Some time ago; I do not know how long."

"There has been no letter from you, but had there been that would hardly excuse your desertion of your husband."

"No," she said drearily. "Nothing can excuse that."

"At least you acknowledge that," he said coldly. "Go with Millie now, and take some rest."

"As if I could rest!" she said passionately.

"You must try," he answered, with a gentler tone in his voice. "The earl must not see you thus. He is very weak, and we are very anxious. Do not add to our anxiety," he added gravely, as Maud appeared to hesitate.

"Come, dear," Miss Harrison said gently, and Maud let her lead her to the door, but as she opened it Lady Dereham quickly turned.

"Father," she said unsteadily; "say one kind word to me! If I have sinned, I have suffered!"

"I believe you have, Maud," he answered more gently. "But you have made him suffer."

He put his hand on her shoulder, and touched her forehead with his lips, and, he felt the convulsive shudder which ran through her slight frame.

She lifted his hand, and touched it with her lips, and the touch almost made him start, her hand and lips were burning.

"You will not keep me from him?" she murmured. "Let me go to him soon, father."

"Yes, yes, as soon as I can; but you must be brave, Maud, for his sake."

"For his sake," she repeated, then, turning from him, she followed Millie from the room up to the one prepared for her, and submitted without a word to the young girl's gentle ministrations, subduing her impatience and anxiety bravely, while Millie brushed the long, fair hair, and coiled it up afresh, and put off the heavy, black dress for one of the fresh white gowns of Maud's girlhood.

And although her face was hardly less colorless than the soft, white cambric itself, she looked less haggard when the change was effected.

But the rest her father had enjoined was impossible to her.

She tried to remain still on the couch where Millie settled her so comfortably, but she could not, and Doctor Harrison's wise little daughter saw that it would be useless to urge her to do so.

When Maud complained of the want of air in the house, she took her down to the drawing-room, out on to the verandah, and there Maud and her companion spent some of the long, dreary hours of the summer night, the former pacing up and down like some wild, caged creature in her restless misery, the latter watching her with sympathising eyes. Once Maud met her glance and paused.

"Don't look so sorry, Millie," she said unsteadily, and another time she stopped her walk to say that she was keeping Millie from her rest, and that she would be so tired she had better go to bed; a proposal at which Millie smiled, and which she quickly negatived.

The hours passed and the early dawn of the summer day reddened the east, the stillness and serenity of the night, the scented air, the flowers gleaming in the faint light, had seemed to mock Maud's misery; the roseate hue of morn's gentle fingers had scarcely touched the eastern sky, when Doctor Kinsley, pale and haggard from his long night's vigil, came out of the glass doors into the fresh, sweet, morning air.

"Come," he said gently, and taking his daughter's hand led her into the house.

It touched him and surprised him, experienced physician as he was, to see what a sudden, still composure fell upon Maud, as he took her hand.

The minute before she had been feverish, excited, trembling, shaken, now she was quiet, composed, steady, and she bore the scrutiny of the doctors into whose presence he led her, bravely and calmly.

Doctor Harrison was one of them, and he came forward and took her hand; the other two gentlemen bowed gravely, looking at her with grave, keen, questioning eyes.

Maud's glance did not fall beneath theirs; she met their eyes steadfastly, but so sadly, so pleadingly, that a mist came before their own.

There was a minute's silence, then one of them spoke.

"Lady Dereham," he said gently, but gravely and impressively, "I will not try to conceal from you that the earl is in great danger; but I may tell you that neither I nor any of my colleagues here despair of his life. Will you help our endeavors to save it?"

Would she? There was no need for words while that look was in her eyes.

"May we trust you?" he went on gravely. "I have told you that the danger is great; any agitation might be fatal; therefore, unless you are prepared to witness his suffering without tears, to help the nurses in attendance without exciting the patient, it will be better that you do not go to him. You do not look strong," he added doubtfully.

"I can be very strong," she said in a voice clear and sweet as a silver bell, and though very, very low, quite calm and steady; "I shall be very strong to help to undo what I have done. You may trust me."

The physicians consulted together apart for a few minutes.

It seemed to Maud as she waited, that the elder of the two strangers thought she had better not be admitted to the sick room, but that the younger pleaded for her, and she thanked him for it in the depths of her bleeding heart.

They themselves were terribly anxious, and they feared greatly the result of the next few hours.

Looking at Maud, they felt that she looked physically incapable of bearing up under the anxiety and pain of witnessing suffering which had almost unnerved themselves, the constant variation of fever and stupor which were so terrible to see.

It was no sight, they felt, for a delicate, inexperienced woman, especially one so deeply interested in the patient.

And yet Lord Dereham in his fever had called so unceasingly for her, that they felt that her presence must have some influence over him, that perhaps her voice might rouse him from the deathlike stupor into which he had fallen.

Yet they had so little hope that it was almost cruel to reject her prayer.

Maud saw their indecision; she moved a step nearer to them, still and calm, in her soft white gown.

"You need not fear to trust me," she said in the sweet silvery tones which were so low and yet so clear. "My father will tell you that I am not unused to illness, and I know that I can be quite calm now, if you will let me see him and nurse him. Perhaps,"—for a moment the sweet, low voice faltered then steadied again—"you think that I do not love him enough to make the effort, and perhaps I have deserved that you should think so, but if my life could spare him a tithe of what he is suffering now, it would be gladly, freely given."

"I am sure of that," the younger of the two London doctors said impulsively, and Maud turned her sweet, wistful eyes upon him with a look of gratitude.

"Heaven bless you for such a belief," she said earnestly. "Oh, sir, plead for me. You have a wife at home, perhaps, would you wish that she should be shut out of your sick room—even if she had sinned against you? I will be so patient, so obedient, so untiring! Ah! your nurses, however skilful, will not, cannot be so untiring as I will be or so careful! And I think—nay, I am sure—that if he knew," the loveliest little flush rose in her face for a moment, then faded into marble pallor again, "he would say that I might be with him."

Earnestly as she had spoken, with an intensity of earnestness they could not but feel, there had been no trace of excitement in her manner.

It would have been impossible to recognize in the calm, composed woman the trembling, agitated, nervous creature whom Addie Elmore had watched so anxiously during the last few weeks.

Her father looked at her in almost incredulous surprise.

Then after another slight hesitation, so slight as to be almost imperceptible, Sir Francis Praed, who was the senior physician, took her hand in his; it was as steady as if it had been carved in marble and as cold.

"Come," he said quietly, and those watching her saw how a sudden gleam flashed into the sweet sad eyes as they left the room together.

CHAPTER XXXVIII.

IT was well that Maud had nerved herself to bear a great shock, and that the physician had prepared her for one, or her strength would infallibly have given way when she entered the room where her husband lay, and saw the terrible alteration which his illness and suffering had made.

As it was, it seemed for a moment as if her heart stood suddenly still, and the room grew dark, but she recovered herself before even Sir Francis had time to notice the sudden weakness, and gently disengaging her hand from the physician's she went softly to the bed and knelt down beside it.

Sir Francis watched her keenly, as did the nurse, who, guessing that this beautiful pale woman in her long white gown was the "Maud" for whom her patient called so incessantly, had softly withdrawn, and stood at a little distance from the bed; after a minute's scrutiny, however, the doctor and the nurse exchanged a glance of satisfaction, and the former noiselessly quitted the room.

Maud did not heed his exit, she had forgotten for the moment any presence but that of her husband; her whole soul was in her eyes as they rested on his face, the pale, lined, sunken face which rested upon the pillows, and on which the light of the new born day dwelt so tenderly.

His eyes were closed, and the long dark lashes rested on his hollow cheeks, but he was not asleep; there was none of the calm and repose of slumber about him, although he lay motionless; even a child could have seen that this rest—if it might be called—was not sleep.

He was terribly altered. Sometimes Maud, looking in the mirror over the mantel in the little sitting room at Calton Square, had said to herself that she was changed, but it was not with such a change as this.

She felt that she herself, his wife, might have passed him in the street without recognition, and her heart sank heavily with a terrible fear.

Could it be that he could recover? Could such a wreck of manhood ever be restored even to comparative health again?

Was this her work? she thought, with a remorse which increased with every faint yet quick breathing of the suffering man.

The room in which he was, was her own old room, the room where she had passed so many happy hours, where she had dreamed so many bright day-dreams, where she had wept so many tears.

The room where she had stood, robed in her marriage dress, on the last morning of her single life, before going to take the vows which she had so recklessly broken. Her own old room!

Ah! was it not because it was hers that he had wished to be there, she thought, with a quickened beating of her heart?

There were so many things in it still, although it had been divested of most of its ornaments and dainty draperies by the doctor's orders, and the polished oaken floor was carpetless, to remind him of her, that she told herself that he could not have forgotten her or learnt to hate her, or he would have hated these things which reminded him of her; and, kneeling there, her whole heart rose to Heaven in one passionate prayer that he might be spared to her, that she might be allowed to atone for what she had made him suffer.

And almost are the last words of that passionate supplication had winged their upward flight, Lord Dereham opened his dark eyes, the eyes which had been so proud and so tender and so kindly, but which were now glazed and sightless and blank, and looked blindly upward into the lovely, loving, anguished face bent over him, into the sweet, brown eyes which had once made his sunshine, but whose wistful, hungry yearning met no answering, kindly look from him now, although his voice uttered her name in quick, husky, strained tones—

"Maud! Maud! Maud!"

Breathless and trembling inwardly she listened; for a moment she even dared to hope that he had recognised her, but the hope was but evanescent, she saw directly that this was no recognition, but part of the delirium, in which he had called for her so persistently, and called for her still, even now when she knelt beside him, with her hand on his burning, restless fingers, in her terrible anxiety and passionate love, disregarded unheeded, unrecognised.

The daylight grew in the eastern sky, until day had come with all its power; in the darkened room the windows were set wide open to admit what little air there was; the night nurse had gone, and the nurse who replaced her during the day had come.

The doctors had come and gone, and come again. Sir Francis Praed had not gone to London; he was waiting hoping and fearing, absorbed in his interest in the case, an interest not wholly professional, perhaps, but increased by Maud's distress and anxiety.

A long period of wandering had succeeded that stupor; he had not recognised his wife, but called for her again and again, even while she bent over him, whispering his name, holding his burning hands in her little ice-cold palms, and bathing his throbbing brow.

The low, husky voice, now rising in passion, then sinking in weakness, was never silent for many minutes at a time; and even in those brief intervals of silence the fever-bright eyes were wide open with that blank, sightless look which was so terrible to the watcher by his side.

And as terrible were those wild, delirious utterances which showed her how he had suffered in the separation, his entreaties that she should forgive him, his shuddering repetition of some of her own bitter words uttered during that last unhappy interview when she had reproached him so bitterly for the deception he had practiced; his anxious search for her, so hopeless yet so earnest, and his scornful repudiation of Doctor Blake's insinuations which showed her so clearly that the cruel suspicions which the latter had tried to instil into her husband's mind had never for a moment taken hold there.

Scene after scene of their married life, their courtship, of the sorrowful time preceding it, Lord Dereham seemed to live through again, as he tossed restlessly on the wide, low couch which she had never left; but Maud noticed through it all he kept the secret of her brother's guilt.

That never passed his lips, although once or twice he spoke of Arnold Graeme's sacrifice, and of his worthiness and nobility, and sadly, with such wistful longing in his broken tones, of Maud's love for him.

"He was worthy," he said again and again, while each word fell on the tortured ears and heart of that pale woman who bent so anxiously over the pillows on which he moved so restlessly. "So worthy of her love, but I came between them and stole her from him, cheated him out of the reward he deserved, and she said—ah, the bitterest sorrow my life could know—the knowledge of your unworthiness—she said that, and I was false, false, that I had made her my wife by a lie, 'and that a life lived out by my side would be impossible to her, and that she would forgive when she forgot.'"

And then quick terrible laughter would break from his lips, laughter which made Maud shudder and sicken, even while outwardly she gave no sign of weakness, and the gentle hospital sister who watched with her wondered at her courage and composure.

Then the laughter would die away, and in a low, faint, exhausted voice he would repeat sentences from her last letter to him, which told her how often and with what keen suffering he had read it, and then again that pitiful cry of "Maud, Maud!" would echo through the quiet house; and when Lady Dereham sank on her knees beside him, pressing her hands to his brow and trying to soothe him with tenderest words, he shrank from her and said that her touch burned like fire. And in this delirium Maud learned what perhaps she would never have learnt from his lips, that the man he had gone back to save from the fire was Ernest Blake, the man who had tried to injure him, and who now owed his life to the man whom he had done his best, or his worst to wrong.

And so the summer day drew on to evening, and there was no change from the restless fever and wandering save that almost deathlike stupor of exhaustion which followed it.

His wife never left his side, save for a moment once or twice to swallow, obediently, yet sorely against her will, the nourishment on which her father insisted and without which doubtless her strength could not have borne the strain upon it.

And the dawn of the second day, when it filled the eastern sky with its glory of crimson and gold and pink, found her still there, her face drawn with unspeakable suffering, her eyes watchful and untiring, and the sleep for which they watched apparently as far as ever from the wide, fevered eyes over which Maud longed to close the heavy lids, to shut in the feverish lustre and vacant stare.

The anxiety grew with every passing hour; every access of fever lessened the little strength which remained.

The stupors, when they came, were longer and more deathlike; but towards the evening of that second day it seemed to the anxious physicians and to the nurses that the fever lessened, that the patient submitted more easily to the touch of the little hands which bathed his brow, that he took with less resistance a few drops of the restorative which Maud held to his parched and blackened lips, and that there was a change, so slight as to be almost imperceptible even to the physician's keen and experienced eyes, on the haggard, worn face.

The night hours wore on. Sir Francis Praed, who had been up to town and had returned towards evening, was watching by one side of the bed, Doctor Kinsley was near him, watching also that deathlike face, so worn and emaciated, yet with a faint look of peace dawning over its altered lineaments; on the other side Maud knelt alone, her eyes also fixed upon it with a look of yearning unutterable love, her breath hardly perceptible, although her heart was beating fast and furiously, and her lips were white as her gown in her intense anxiety.

The earl had lain with closed eyes for some short time; they dared not hope that

he slept, yet his face had lost something which had made it so terrible to see in the long stupors which had hitherto held him in the intervals of delirium.

It was turned towards Maud as it rested on the pillows, and towards dawn, just as if he had felt her presence, his eyes opened slowly and heavily and rested upon her face, and into the dim, glazed, dark eyes crept slowly a faint look of recognition.

"Maud!"

Only her name, which he had uttered hundreds of times during the last two days, but the utterance thrilled her to her inmost being with wild joy, for it told her that he knew her again at last.

CHAPTER XXXIX.

"MAUD!"

Only her name, but what joy and relief its conscious utterance brought with it.

Maud, fortunately for her, did not know how intensely critical the moment was, or her agitation might have unnerved her and excited the patient.

Sir Francis watched her with an anxiety which he had rarely felt before, feeling powerless at the moment either to advise or direct. But the wife's great love helped her.

As she read the faint yet joyful recognition in the dim eyes, which had lost some of their feverish lustre, and saw how he moved his head towards her feebly, as if he wished to lay it on her breast, she drew it with exquisite gentleness to that resting-place, and smiled so bravely into the sunken eyes which rested on her own.

The smile seemed reflected in them as he murmured her name again, and she stooped and put her lips to his.

As she raised her head his eyes closed, his head sunk more heavily on its chosen resting-place, and the physicians leaned forward anxiously, not daring to hope it was sleep, yet unwilling to fear that he had again swooned.

But what they dared not hope had come to pass—Maud's voiceless prayer had been heard; he had fallen asleep.

At first the slumber was somewhat fitful and restless; once or twice he opened his eyes quickly, as if fearful of some disaster; but they rested on that tender, loving face so watchful of him, and the faint, peaceful smile dawned in them again; and after a while Sir Francis saw that it would be safe to remove him from Maud's arm and place him on his pillows once more.

And as the night wore on, the blessed, restful sleep continued, healing and life-giving.

The hope grew and deepened in Sir Francis Fraed's grave eyes, and at dawn he took Maud's chill hand in his, and led her gently from the room.

"I can give you hope," he said unsteadily. "He will live. That sleep may last for hours, and until he wakens he will not need you. Take some rest yourself, my child, now; you need it sorely. My poor child, can you not hear me?"

She looked at him with dim and sightless eyes, but his words did not reach her; the revulsion of feeling almost unnerved her; he put her into a chair, and brought her some water.

"You hear me, do not you?" he asked her gently. "The earl will live, I hope and believe; but there is still danger from his extreme weakness. Lady Dereham, you had better take some rest now."

But she was strong again as she rose and put her hand into his, and looked up gratefully into his kind, dark face.

"May I not stay with him?" she said quietly. "I will not distress him. Ah, let me stay; it is all dark and empty where he is not."

And she had her way, and through the long summer day she watched by him while he slept, a slender, motionless figure in a white gown, with a look of almost maternal tenderness in her beautiful brown eyes, so that when evening came, and in the dim light of the shaded room his lids unclosed, her face was the first on which his eyes rested, and the light was not so dim but that she saw the sudden love-light which brightened their sunken depths.

But many hours must elapse before the doctors dared leave them together to the explanation which had to be made before there could be perfect confidence between them once more.

Before Maud could show her penitence, and entreat forgiveness for her harshness, and give vent to the sorrow, and repentance, and love which filled her heart.

All immediate danger was over truly, but the earl's weakness and exhaustion were extreme.

He seemed to have so little strength to bear the pain he still suffered from his arm that there was still cause for watching and tenderest nursing and care, and hope was but tremulous and uncertain in their hearts.

But ceaseless watching and untiring care were his, even the nurses seeming to share Lady Dereham's unceasing anxiety and disregard of fatigue.

She never left him save when he slept, and then only to snatch the rest on which her father and Doctor Harrison insisted; and the long letter she wrote to Harriet Elmore, in a hand-writing which showed how unsteady the little hands were which had written it, was written beside Lord Dereham's bedside, and it said so much and yet so little that Addie laughed and cried over it in the little sitting-room in Dalton Square where Maud had told her the story of her life, and of her one great sin of harshness, and of her long penitence.

But that letter was three days old, and Addie had read it many times, and Mrs. Wilford had been told of Maud's happy reunion with her husband, before the young countess dared to touch upon it to Ivor; but as strength returned to him in a feeble measure, the wistful eyes told Maud how anxious he was that there should be no longer any barrier between them, and trembling a little, with her heart beating so fast that her lips were white, she resolved to ask his forgiveness for her cruelty.

It was evening; the earl had been lifted, at his own wish, on to a low couch by the open window.

The day had been hot and even sultry, but the evening was cool, and balmy, and clear, more like the evening under foreign skies, without a trace of mist or cloud to mar its beauty.

Maud was sitting on a low seat by the couch, she had been reading to him in her low sweet voice, and they had been silent for a little while.

Maud's eyes were looking wistfully out into the still evening, in whose soft light the sweet old-fashioned garden looked so fair and bright.

The earl's were fixed upon her face, which looked so pale, so very pale and grave as the light of the fading day fell upon it.

The book from which she had been reading lay open upon her knee, and her hand rested on its pages, the frail little hand on which the wedding ring hung so loosely now.

Presently her sorrowful eyes came slowly back from the flower-gemmed garden and met his as they rested on her face.

She forced a little smile to her lips as she gently put aside the book from which she had been reading, and bent towards him with her eyes somewhat dim and her lips somewhat unsteady.

"You are feeling a little better to-night, Ivor?" she asked him gently.

"Much stronger, dear," he replied, his thin fingers closing over hers.

"Much stronger!" she repeated, with a little fitful smile. "And so weak yet."

He smiled as he lifted her hand to his lips for a moment, and then, after a minute, he said softly—

"What is that yearning in your eyes, Maud? I wonder if you know how wistful they are just now!"

"Are they?" she murmured. "Let me tell you why, dear. I am hungering to hear your voice say that you forgive me all this long pain and suffering of which I have been the cause."

She had fallen on her knees beside the couch now, and bowed her head over it. Lord Dereham put his hand fondly on her ruffled, golden hair.

"You the cause, my darling!" he repeated. "Nay, how is that? You are the cause, I think, under Heaven, that I am living now. Your sweet eyes seemed to draw me back from the very brink of the grave. Maud, how good it was of you to come to me when I needed you so sorely, yet when I had forfeited all right to your dear presence. My darling, you will not—you will not leave me again?"

"Ivor!"—the sweet, low voice was trembling notwithstanding all its efforts, the loving eyes, so sad, so wistful, were resting upon his face—"may I stay? Will you forgive me and let me try to atone for the past? I wrote to you; I wrote asking if I might come to you, and when no answer came, I thought, I feared, that I had offended you past all forgiveness."

"You wrote to me?" he said, raising himself slightly, weak as he was, on his elbow.

"Yes, I wrote; only a few lines, I dared not write more. Something had happened to show me how wrong I had been, how deeply I had sinned, and Addie—ah, I forget, you did not know—Addie is a friend who has been so good to me during this most unhappy year, Ivor; it was she who told me that I should write, who made me do it when I dared not because I feared you would be too angry with me, as indeed I deserved that you should be; it was she who showed me, too, how wrong I had been, and how deep my penitence should be. And it was deep, Ivor; I think my heart was broken with sorrow at my base return for—ah, let me speak, my dearest and best, let me tell you all that has been in my heart, all my sorrow, all my penitence."

"My darling, I never blamed you," he said tenderly.

Her eyes filled with tears.

"And that you did not, makes my sin but the greater," she answered unsteadily. "Oh, my husband, can I ever hope that you will give me back the place in your heart which I forfeited?"

"Which you never lost, Maud."

"Because you were too generous," she said. "Addie wanted me to come to you, Ivor; she said it was my duty to come, but I dared not. I had behaved so vilely to you, so ungratefully, that I dared not. It seemed to me that if you turned from me, as I had turned from you, I should have died, as I almost did, I think, in those days that followed, when no letter came, and ——"

"My dearest, I never had a word from you," he said earnestly in his weak voice, as he lay back on his cushions, looking at her with such sad yet such happy eyes. "I had searched until I lost all hope and ——"

"I know, I know!" she said, with a great sob in her throat. "Oh, Ivor, can you ever forgive me that I so mistrusted you, that when you——"

The low, broken voice failed, the pretty head sank, and the fair, pale face, so full of love and sorrow, was hidden.

There was a little silence.

"Maud," the earl said then, very gently, very tenderly; "there can be no question of forgiveness between us, unless it be that you forgive me for so cruelly deceiving you. If I have suffered—I think you have suffered no less—my darling, and I deserved to suffer, while you did not, and ——"

"Oh, Ivor, hush; your nobility makes my baseness seem all the greater," she pleaded passionately. "It seems impossible that your love should have stood such a test."

"Is there any test to which you could put it that it would not stand?" with a happy little smile, which was weary enough for all its happiness. "Maud, love is love, for evermore! But, darling," he continued, leaning against her shoulder as she rose from her kneeling posture, and went back to her low chair by his side; "how was it you came to me in my need?"

"Nicholas came for me, dear," she answered gently.

"Nicholas! but he did not know."

"Yes, a letter had come, just one line, not a letter, with my address. It was sent to papa, and Nicholas came for me at once, and he was so good to me, Ivor, although he must have hated me for being the cause of all your suffering."

"But, Maudie, who sent that line? Whom are we to thank for it?"

A faint shade of color rose for a moment in her face, then died out again.

"At first I thought it was Addie," she answered, in a low tone of pain, "but afterwards, since I came here, Ivor, I thought it came from——"

"From whom, my dearest?" he queried gently, as she paused and rested her cheek on his hair.

"From—from Doctor Blake!"

The answer was so unexpected that she felt him start slightly, as he rested against her shoulder.

There was a little silence.

"Did he know where you were, Maud?" the earl said in a very low voice.

"Yes."

"How long had he known it?"

"For some months, Ivor. It was this way," she added quietly. "Addie met with a slight accident, and he chanced to be the nearest doctor, and he came, and afterwards he came sometimes to see us. I thought he meant to be kind to us, for he kept my secret and seemed to take a kindly interest in us both, and I even thought once that he was learning to care for Addie, and I thought that the love of such a woman would make him a good man. And then, at that time, Ivor, I knew nothing against him, and—dear, forgive me, I am grieving you."

"Go on telling me," he said quietly, but with a stern brow and compressed lip. "I must know all, Maud."

She looked at him anxiously, her eyes full of trouble, and as he met her glance, his face relaxed slightly.

"Tell me, dear," he went on gently. "Do not fear to hurt me; nothing in the world could hurt me so much as to think there was not entire confidence between us now."

"But afterwards," she went on softly, "I saw that he had not come in friendship, but in enmity, that I was wrong to have trusted him, and——"

"How did you learn your error, Maud?" the earl said very gently, moving his head as it lay on her shoulder, so that he could look up at the fair, earnest, sorrowful face, into which a faint color rose, slowly mounting until it reached her brow and was lost in the waves of her soft fair hair.

There was a little silence.

"Can't you tell me, Maud?" the young man said softly, lifting his fingers and touching the pink cheek gently. "Would it hurt you? Then don't tell me, dear one, if it pains you. Let me guess."

His face was very stern as he turned it from her, and looked out into the peaceful evening landscape, at the fragrant old garden in which the roses gleamed, pallid in the dim fading light.

"Ivor," Maud whispered, putting her lips to the slim fingers she held in her own. "But for him I should not be with you now. Let him go out of our lives forever."

A long silence followed the timidly spoken words, then he said softly—

"You are right, dear. It is not for such an one as I, to whom so much has been forgiven, to cherish anger; and he has given you back to me, after all."

"Such a gift!" she said, trying to speak lightly; then, as their eyes met, her own filled with tears of mingled joy and pain.

"Can't you guess how precious that gift is?" he whispered fondly. "Maud, could any other be so dear and so precious to me?"

"Because you value it so much more than it deserves," she murmured, and there was another long, happy silence in the quiet room, during which Lord Dereham stifled his passionate resentment—for it had been passionate—against the man whose life he had saved, and who had wronged them both so cruelly.

"I think if I had been sure, I could not have done it," he said smiling faintly. "I guessed—nay, in my heart I knew—that he had lied to me, that he had tried to part us, even more completely than we were parted already; but I would not own it, even to myself! When I come down here, Maud, longing for home as a wounded animal longs for his lair, your father—and mine, too, for no father could have been kinder than he has been—told me that he had had some reason to think that he had cared for you during his stay here; and then I guessed why he had tried"—his voice hardened, in spite of his efforts to keep it gentle—"to send me out of England."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

THE HORSESHOE OMEN.

Horse-shoes are surrounded, as it were, with a halo of superstition, and in all times an awe seems to have been felt of them. Where, however, to begin with an account of them and where to end, is a matter somewhat difficult to decide, the subject being so rich in folk-lore. It is considered, even in the present day, particularly lucky to find a horse-shoe that has been lost; and a horse-shoe nailed over a door is said to be effectual in keeping out the Evil One and his earthly satellites—witches and warlocks. This superstition possesses a firm hold in many rural districts, and may be seen in the horse-shoes that are nailed over stable and other doors.

The principal gateway at Allahabad, India is thickly studded with horse-shoes of every size and make. There are hundreds of them nailed all over the great gates, doubtless the offerings of many a wayfarer, who has long since finished his earthly pilgrimage. It has been suggested and apparently with some reason, that in ancient Pagan times the horse-shoe may have been a recognized symbol in serpent worship, and hence may have arisen its common use against all manner of evil. The resemblance is obvious, more especially to the species of harmless snake which is rounded at both ends, so that head and tail are both apparently alike.

The creature moves backward or forward at pleasure; hence the old belief that it actually had two heads, and was indestructible, as, even when cut into two parts, it was supposed that the divided heads would seek one another and reunite. It stands to reason that in a snake-worshipping community such a creature would be held in high reverence.

Even in Scotland various snake-like bracelets and ornaments have been found, which seem to favor this theory, and at a very early period both snakes and horse-shoes seem to have been engraved as symbols on sacred stones. We hear of the latter having been sculptured not only on the thresholds of old London houses, but even on the ancient churches in various parts of Great Britain.

They are constantly nailed upon houses, stables, and ships, as a charm against witchcraft, in Scotland, England and Wales, and especially in Cornwall, where, not only on vans and omnibuses, but sometimes on the grim gates of old gaols, we may find this curious trace of ancient superstition. Aubery, in his "Miscellanies," says: "Under the porch of Stainfield Church, in Suffolk, I saw a tile with a horse-shoe upon it, placed there to hinder the power of witches, though one would imagine that the holy water would have been sufficient." The charm of the horse-shoe lies in its being forked and presenting two points.

Even the two forefingers kept apart are thought to avert the Evil Eye, or prevent the machinations of the lord and master of the nether world. The pentacle, or seal of Solomon, is supposed to possess great powers, as being composed of two triangles presenting six forked ends, and, therefore called pentacle (five) erroneously.

When Monmouth Street was a fashionable locality of London, it was noted for its number of horse-shoes nailed over the doorways or on the sills. In 1813 Sir Henry Ellis counted thirteen there; in 1841 there were six, in 1852 the number had increased to eleven; and since that time their number has declined to nil. Nelson, it is said, had great faith in the power of the horse-shoe, and one was nailed to the mast of his flagship "Victory."

"Lucky Doctor Jones" attributed the success of his fever powder to his finding a horse-shoe, which he adopted as a crest upon his carriage. At the gate of a brewery in London, and on the trappings of the horses of the establishment, a horse-shoe is very conspicuous. The lucky belief in the horse-shoe may have led to its adoption as the ornamental part of a scarf-pin.

We are told of a very curious superstition which prevails in Java and in China, answering in some measure to our practice of nailing horse-shoes over stable doors. The following reference occurs in "Leland's Letters": "It is, as all the world knows, considered lucky to find a horse-shoe, but I picked one up just as I set foot on the track. I am assured by the most experienced sorceresses and witches among the people, that of all others a shoe found on a race-track is a talisman of most potent power. It is explained that perhaps one of the horses running lost the race by losing the shoe, and so you'll get the luck he lost.'"

PROUD OF HIS SISTER.—A Chicago paper relates the case of a young man who was regarded as a phenomenon, because he took his sister to all the best entertainments, and actually devoted himself to her during the lecture and concert season. Being praised for the unusual attention to his sister, the young man properly and proudly replied:

"No, there's nothing wonderful or extraordinary about it. She is the only woman I know in whom I have the most thorough confidence. She is always the same, always pleased and affectionate, and to tell you the candid truth, I'm afraid she'll go and marry some of these imitation men around here, and be unhappy all her life.

"She has nobody else to look to, and I'll take care she does not have to look to anybody else. I suppose some day a genuine man will come along. If he's a genuine man, I won't object. Until he does come, she's good enough for me; and if I ever find as good a girl, I'll marry her."

The example is most commendable. A young man would do well to seek his sister's society until he finds another lady as good as his sister.

SWEET DAY OF DAYS.

BY G. C. D.

On the moss-grown bridge I stand,
Where you gave me once your hand,
Where a story, new, yet old,
Once without a word was told.
Still the daylight slowly dies,
Ebbing from the tender skies;
Still the river creeps along,
Crooning yet its wistful song.
Day of days, sweet day of days,
Years their shadows round us raise;
Happy they who, looking on,
Still remember days agone!

Ah! of all sweet days that day,
Gone from sight and reach away,
Even as this flower I throw
Down the old gray stream will go.
Nay—it lingers—prisoned lies,
Where the swaying willows rise,
Out of reach, love, like sweet days
Lingering yet in memory's gaze!
Day of days, sweet day of days,
Years their shadows round us raise;
Happy they who, looking on,
Still remember days agone!

FORTUNE'S HAND.

BY THE AUTHOR OF "STRANGERS STILL," "PRINCE AND PEASANT," "THE LIGHTS OF ROCKBY," "A WOMAN'S SIN," ETC.

CHAPTER XLII.

I DO not know how I am to endure it!" Yolande is saying to herself this afternoon, as she sits alone sewing in the work-room with the window open.

It is a relief—a great relief—to be alone, the greatest that the sorrowful monotony of her days ever brings to her now.

Her aunt Keren has gone to a neighbor's house to tea, and old uncle Silas, after his early dinner, has listened feebly to the reading of the newspaper by Yolande until he falls asleep.

So there is an end to the small woes and the petty fidgets and cross-grained speeches and martyr-like moods for a while.

"I do not know how I am to endure it," Yolande repeats, with dreary calmness—"week after week, month after month—perhaps year after year—trying to be patient with aunt, trying to be cheerful with uncle, putting up with unnecessary discomfort, pinching, contriving with needless economy for nothing. If there were a special or worthy object in it—if it were to benefit any one dear to one—I could do it easily, cheerfully, willingly. I can't now! What shall I do? What can I do?"

Despondency like a thick cloud envelopes the lonely girl, sitting there in the gloomy silent room, thinking of her life, marred before she is two-and-twenty.

Impatience at her fate tempts her to cry out against Heaven and against man—dull despair, which tries to call itself resignation prevents her.

"I am tired of hoping, tired of praying," Yolande moans, with her head laid down on a pile of household linen. "It is not the will of Heaven that I should be happy. I have lost all that made life precious to me, and yet I must try to live on somehow."

She is very tired with bodily fatigue from a long hard morning's work in helping the two inefficient young servants.

She feels solitary and helpless and forlorn, spending this calm pleasant afternoon sewing in a dull room facing a dead wall.

Her tears are flowing as she rests her aching head, with all the brown hair roughened and dishevelled, on the pile of coarse kitchen towelling which is being mended.

And in the stillness of the silent house and the quiet grounds she fancies she hears footsteps walking up the gravelled drive to the house, and then pausing—loitering in a curious purposeless fashion.

She does not trouble to ascertain whose are the steps, though she knows that they are neither the maid-servant's nor those of the solitary gardener—it does not much matter whose the footsteps are.

"Some visitor, I am afraid," she thinks at last, with an unsettled look at her gown and tumbled cuffs. "Why don't they ring or knock? I hope Anna won't open the door with a soiled apron, as she did yesterday. Well, I can't help it if she does. Oh, dear—I hope it isn't a visitor whom I must go in to talk to."

There is silence now for a moment, and Yolande is laying her head down with a weary sigh of relief, when she fancies she hears the footsteps again crossing the sward at the corner of the house, and then coming down the narrow gravelled space right in front of the work-room.

"It is only Tom Blackford, after all. How stupid I am," she says, with a quick tremulous sigh.

Her heart beats wildly even yet at the barest chance of tidings of her darling.

Tom Blackford has a very quick firm step for a heavily-shod gardener.

Tom Blackford is guilty of extraordinary presumption in pausing suddenly at the open window to stare in at the desolate figure by the work-table.

Tom Blackford too has a very goodly presence, if this pale handsome young fellow with the silky fair moustache and brilliant gray-blue eye is he.

The next moment he has leaped in over the low window-sill, and with incoherent words of gladness and tenderness and pleading has caught Yolande in his strong arms.

"My poor little girl! My poor little wife! My own dear little wife," she hears him saying over and over again, while he covers her face with kisses. "Yolande, won't you speak to me? Won't you try to forgive me, darling?" he pleads, straining her to his heart, lifting her upon his knee, pressing the little head with its dishevelled brown hair tightly against his breast. "Sweetheart, won't you speak to me? I heard that you wrote to me, but I never got any letter, never knew anything of your terrible troubles, my darling. I would have come from the ends of the earth to you if I had thought you wanted me. Yolande, speak to me, dear."

But Yolande literally cannot speak to him for a full minute.

She feels that she is suffocating and choking with excitement, but strives bravely to keep control of herself.

She gazes at him with wild eyes full of agonised longing, and, with her hand clenched on his, raises her head from his breast to look at him.

"There is no use in my saying anything or being glad," she says, in a slow piteous way; "you will go away again, and leave me alone."

Tears fill Dallas Glynne's eyes, though hers are bright and tearless. He raises her left hand to his lips and kisses her wedding-ring.

"As surely as my marriage-ring is on your finger—as truly as Heaven hears me, my darling wife," he says solemnly—"you and I will never part again as long as we both shall live."

* * * * *

That sweet calm autumn day has passed, and many more have followed, and now October's rough winds are stripping the woodlands bare and bringing wet stormy nights, with the windows rattling and the rain beating against the panes, and wild blasts howling around the closed doors and curtained casements of House.

Ah, blessed word—blessed place where peace and love reign—as unlike the dreary world of cold and darkness outside as is the Home beyond the grave unlike the rough stormy ways of this mortal life.

Yolande Glynne and her husband are in their own home.

It is a pretty unpretentious little house forty miles nearer London than Fair View, for Dallas goes to business every day.

His friend Mr. Daville has got him a post with plenty of hard work and not too much salary to begin with.

"We'll work you up to something better by-and-by," Mr. Daville said. "At present you're not worth more than what we are paying you, but, if you'll let me see what's in you in the course of a couple of years or so, I'll not forget you."

It is an under-secretaryship of a railway company; and Dallas Glynne most thankfully accepted it as an enormous improvement on the Baltimore Hotel and Mr. Davison.

That shining light resigns his situation soon after Mr. Daville's return from the States, and the head-waiter steps into his place.

But Yolande's letters never come to light, though hall-porter and head-waiter agree in telling Mr. Daville that letters such as he describes were certainly handed in by the postman at the hall office.

The Pacific Salvage Company is being wound up, and of their money the luckless shareholders will never see so much as a pinch of golden sand from the depths that have sucked down tons of thousands of sovereigns.

Some other of old Silas Dormer's speculations have turned out not quite so badly as was expected.

There are three or four thousand pounds more than any one hoped for rescued from the ruin.

There will be perhaps about five hundred a year secured when the winding-up process is over; and to this sum both Dallas Glynne and his wife insist on adding three hundred a year more.

After a great deal of persuasion, Miss Dormer is induced to consent to this arrangement.

Her brother does not appear to care much one way or the other. The blow has seemed to stun him, and he potters about his garden, and talks about his fruit-trees and celery-beds, but very seldom of his lost fortune.

"You are not to blame for the deeds of that wicked Lord Pentreath, your cousin, Captain Glynne," Miss Dormer says plaintively; "and it's hardly fair, I think, for you and Yolande to deprive yourselves of three hundred a year to add to our comforts. It shows a nice mi-end in you—that is all I can say. Of course you know that every shilling we have will be left to you and Yolande and your children, Captain Glynne?"

"Thank you, aunt Keren," he says gaily. "I hope the young beggars will have to wait a long time for it."

"The what?" asks the old lady, looking scandalized.

"Beggars—babies — youngsters," Dallas replies, laughing, but resolving not to talk slang again to a precise old lady.

But October has not closed when Yolande receives one morning a black-edged envelope with a coronet above the seal.

She had been expecting a letter from Lady Pentreath for two or three weeks in answer to one she has written to her to tell her of her happiness and the goodness of her beloved to her, and his amiability and thoughtfulness and numerous other perfections.

And now a letter comes from Isabelle Glover to tell her that poor Lady Pentreath's sufferings are over, telling her too the date fixed for the funeral, that ceremony that seems to follow with such ghastly rapidity after the last gasping breath has ceased.

Yolande and Dallas choose the loveliest huge anchor of snowy flowers that Covent Garden can produce—one mass of waxen blooms and trembling glimpses of maiden-hair fern—and send it with their names and their love and deep regret, and think only that they have lost a friend of whom they will hear no more.

"I shall put on black for her, dear," Yolande says—"not because she was a countess and a relative, but because I mourn her in my heart."

And, on the very evening that she comes down to dinner dressed in her fresh mourning for the first time, the post brings a letter from Lord Pentreath's solicitor, and Dallas hears of his legacy.

"In token of my friendship and regard for Dallas Glynne and his wife Yolande" Lady Pentreath has bequeathed twelve thousand pounds to him and his heirs absolutely.

"Shall we take a grander house, little woman, or shall we save it up for the heirs?" Dallas asks.

"I am very happy here, dearest," Yolande answers; "I was never so happy in any house before in my life, and"—with a shiver—"I hate grand houses!"

CHAPTER XLIII.

IN their unpretentious little house Lady Nora finds her son and her daughter-in-law when Mr. Carter brings back his wife from a lengthened honeymoon on the Continent.

And, with as much smiling audacity as if she has been their tender benefactress, the little lady, looking perfectly radiant, comes one cold day in November to see them, wrapped in splendid sealskin and sables for which Mr. Carter has just paid a hundred guineas.

She makes herself quite at home, and ignores all unpleasant things in the past—she does not quite approve of such a modest menage, but still she is very affectionate and pleasant and cheerful and gracefully maternal.

But before she goes her son takes her aside, and sternly and determinedly demands the diamond-and-sapphire ring.

"If I must pay for it, I will, mother, no matter what it costs," he says; "but the ring I must and will have."

"You shall have it, Dallas—I told you so before," Lady Nora responds, with a pout. "I have only just returned home, you see; and now I want you and Yolande to come up and see me and Mr. Carter, and dine with us, and be friendly all together. He is really the best of good kind creatures."

"I am glad to hear it," Dallas says, in very cool curt tones. "I hope you will be happy, mother, but I don't want my happiness endangered any more. Mother, I must have Joyce Murray's ring back without delay—I will pay you whatever you please to charge me for it."

"You shall have it next week, Dallas," Lady Nora says briskly.

But she reckons without Mademoiselle Bella Glover.

She offers forty—fifty—eighty guineas in vain for the ring.

Miss Glover informs her that if she were to offer a thousand it would be all the same.

"I am well off now, Lady Nora, and money is not so much an object to me as the possession of the thing I fancy," she writes in reply. "Besides," she adds in a postscript, "the ring is not really yours in any sense of the word. I have never been asked for it by either its former owner or its later owner, Captain Dallas Glynne."

In her despair at this answer, Lady Nora confesses to her son what she has done with the ring, and he himself writes to Isabelle Glover for it.

This letter is all that that astute young woman has been waiting for.

On that very day she packs up her trunks to leave Pentreath, where she has remained since the Countess's funeral, with her friend and staunch ally Mrs. Vavasor.

The Earl, who has been staying with a friend in Derbyshire to seek consolation for his widowed heart, returns home the next day; and in the evening, when he has retired to his study, he has a visit from his "little friend."

He is in a particularly amiable temper this evening — some speculations have turned out splendidly within the last few days, and, for a newly-bereaved widower, he is in very good spirits.

His late Countess's weak-minded will was a blow to him certainly, but then the money he inherited at her death is a solace in itself.

"Not that I grudged you her ladyship's bequest, Belle," he said gloomily, when the will was read.

"Not you—of course not," Belle thought. "You would not have cut down my legacy to five hundred pounds if you had known the terms of her will! Of course not."

But on this evening he feels reconciled to everything and every one and is in a sweetly-pious frame of mind.

He has enjoyed an excellent dinner, and his digestion, for a wonder, is not troubling him.

He is sipping Scotch whiskey and soda-water and turning over the pages of a review when Isabelle enters, and the sight of his "little friend" in her exquisite mourning-gown of thick dull brocade, jet-embroidered, and with ruffles of crape setting off her white throat and arms, is an additional pleasure to him.

Suddenly his "little friend" overwhelms him with the announcement that she is leaving Pentreath Place in the morning.

"Leaving! For good?" he asks, too startled to be angry. "Belle, you're not serious! You can't be! You can't mean you are going to leave me?"

"Indeed I do mean I am going to leave you, my dear Lord Pentreath," Miss Glover replies, with gentle dignity and pathos. "I can do nothing else."

"Why can't you stay on here for—for a while, at all events?" his lordship asks, fidgeting in his chair and mumbling over his words. "I am going away again almost immediately, and shall be here only for flying visits; and you can be mistress here, Belle, and do just as you please."

"Until the new Countess comes," Miss Glover supplements deliberately. "No, thank you, my lord; with all my devotion to you and my friendship for you, nothing you could say or do would induce me to accept that role. I am going to stay with Mrs. Vavasor for a while. Thanks to dear Lady Pentreath and her sweet generous thoughtfulness"—with a taunt in every accent—"I need not turn out in the world friendless and homeless to earn my bread."

"And nothing I could say would induce you to alter your determination, eh, Isabelle, my dear?" the Earl asks, with a chuckle and a crafty smile at her.

"No, nothing," Isabelle replies coldly. "The only word you could say to induce me to stay I know you will never speak. I have been your friend, confidant, adviser, helper—what not; but the moment you ceased to have need of me you would put me aside or suffer it to be done. I prefer putting myself aside to suffering you or your second wife to do it."

"You—you are making mighty sure of my having a second wife, and a new Countess, and all the rest of it!" the Earl says, wriggling a little on his chair and with a sneaking pretence of being displeased.

Isabelle looks at him with all the scorn she feels for him in her bright eyes.

"Not half so sure as she is making of it and waiting for it," she retorts, with a contemptuous smile, "though I am sure enough. Why, I have her wedding-present all ready for her! I'll show it to you. It is charmingly pretty, I think. I hope you and she will think the same."

She takes a tiny morocco case out of her pocket and shows him, nestling in the dark velvet, a beautiful diamond-and-sapphire ring.

"It's not quite new," Miss Glover says brightly, while Lord Pentreath, with his ugly dry puckered lip held in by his teeth and his face an unwholesome purply red, stares at her and the ring alternately, "but it is a lovely ring. You have seen it before I'm sure, and I have no doubt that dear Joyce will be very glad to have it in her own possession again. It has been a useful little ornament in its time," Miss Glover adds, with an air of calm contemplation of the jewel. "It has betrothed Joyce Murray to licensed and unlicensed lovers. I got it out of the possession of the last one, and now he is begging earnestly of me to give it back again to him. Poor Dallas Glynne—this ring has cost him dear! It may cost others dearer before we see the last of it," Miss Glover says, with a sigh, to which his lordship responds with certain very ugly muttered words. "What are you saying?" his tormentor asks in a very shocked tone. "Lord Pentreath, I did not think you could use such language. I was just going to read you the letter for fun"—in a very injured tone. "It came yesterday morning to me. Poor unlucky wretch! I suppose Joyce insists on having the ring returned, lest it damage her chances; and his jealous wife, I suppose, is vowing vengeance because he can't explain certain things satisfactorily; and poor Dallas is telling lies through thick and thin to save himself! Listen to what a fright he's in!" Miss Glover says gaily. "Whatever sum the ring has cost you," she reads, "I will pay you again willingly, and as much more as you think fit to ask me. Poor Dallas—he'd give a thousand pounds for it, I verily believe, and Joyce would give two thousand and more. I might make a lot of money out of this dangerous little bauble," she laughs. "I might establish a system of 'chantage' on the future—I mean on Miss Murray—if I were unprincipled enough to do so. Poor thing! Her prudence did not equal her ambition when she gave that ring to a married lover. Oh, very well, Lord Pentreath"—in a shocked voice—"if you cannot control your temper, I had better go away."

For, in a sudden spasm of rage, his lordship has dashed both ring and letter off the table on to the floor.

Isabelle stoops and picks them up composedly, and is silently leaving the room.

"Stop!" he growls in a very ungentlemanly manner. "Let me see that letter!"

He reads it from beginning to end silently and slowly, and gives it back without a word.

"I will say good-bye to you now and here," Miss Glover says gently, after a pause. "I shall be gone early—perhaps before you are down in the morning. With many thanks for every kindness you have shown me, Lord Pentreath, I say good-bye; and Heaven bless you and keep you from sorrow in days to come."

She kisses the hand his lordship gives her, sulkily though he does so; and her stately robes—Isabelle is always clad as princesses in these days—rustle and swirl as she curtseys deeply and reverently, as if she were saluting royalty.

And then she leaves the room; and when

Lord Pentreath comes down next morning his "little friend" has gone.

Gone forever, she almost fears for a month or two.

After that, a star of hope rises on her horizon—a star of hope in a new constellation—a constellation in which one can discern the outlines of the form of a coronet.

* * * * * * *

Dallas Glynne falls, as Lady Nora failed, in recovering the ring from Isabelle Glover's keeping; but one morning in the spring of the second year after Lady Pentreath's death Joyce Murray has her unlucky jewel restored to her.

It is sent to her by the low-born rival who has triumphed over her at last, and left her with nothing to show for her wasted years, her fading beauty and brightness, her ambitious longings, her falsehood to herself, to love, to truth—nothing but the fairy gold of withered leaves, the dead hopes and ambitions that shrivel and flutter away from her grasp.

* * * * *

Yolande Glynne's baby-daughter is just four months old at this time, and, as all such miraculously wise and beautiful first-born infants do, is daily impressing her admiring father and mother with her great and varied power of "noticing," "laughing," and marvellous general intelligence.

She is a very fair specimen of babyhood certainly—a "Baby May" truly, as she has been baptized by her mother's wish, "Maria Dallas;" and her father thinks the name is not at all pretty enough for his daughter, with her

> "Sinless eyes of blue,
> And parted hair of a pale, pale gold,
> That is priceless every curl."

And it is on the auspicious occasion of celebrating the fourth month of the young lady's mundane existence that Dallas Glynne and his wife receive wedding-cake and cards, and learn that there is a new Countess of Pentreath.

And it is the new Countess—the Right Honorable Lady Isabelle Glynne, nee Glover—who sends back to poor Joyce Murray that fatal ring which has cost her a coronet.

But on that other woman, the bitterest sorrow of whose life has been caused by Joyce Murray's selfish vanity and falsehood—on her who through all has been true to her womanhood, true to her love, faithful in her duties, patient in her troubles, meekly looking to Heaven for help and strength and patience—on her the smile of Heaven rests, as it surely does on all chastened faithful souls sooner or later.

For Yolande Glynne and her husband the fairy gold of lost happiness, wealth, and worldly rank is changed through the blessing of Heaven to the real gold of the love and peace of a godly life, which "with contentment is great gain."

[THE END.]

White Lilac.

BY C. V.

"So much? It is too much!" said a soft, plaintive voice behind me.

I turned—to see a small creature standing on tiptoe before a flower stand at the entrance to Covent Garden as I was passing.

In this position, her head was about on a level with a huge bunch of white lilac; and the rough straw hat pushed back, and the fair curls glittering in the sunshine, the little face was fairly buried in the fragrant bloom.

I stopped short; the bright hair and the pale flowers both arrested me.

Swift as thought, they had caught my memory back to a bowery seat under a white lilac clump, and a golden head upon a level with my shoulder, and a face that for fairness and sweetness might have put the white lilacs themselves to the blush.

Somehow I could not help wondering if this face would be like that face, as these blossoms were like those of the past, faded now more than half-a-dozen years ago.

And it was startlingly like. So like, that I could almost believe that three times half-a-dozen years had vanished, and my little playmate, May—my May Queen, as I used to call her—stood before me among the lilacs.

The child looked up at me, frankly and confidingly, out of those great blue eyes—that might have been May's eyes, forgetful that there had ever been a bitter quarrel and a parting.

What folly in me to be thinking of her now! But, thinking of her, somehow I could not help answering those soft, appealing eyes.

"You wanted the flowers, little one?"

"Yes, sir. Please, sir, the big white ones."

"You like white lilacs?"

The flower-girl behind the stall was singling out a great, sweet bunch, responsive to the coin I had laid beside it. But the child was shaking her small head.

"I like those better," she said, pointing to a mass of yellow daffodils. "But Little Mother, doesn't she just love the big white lilacs? They're for her, sir; and will you make this boy them?"

She showed me her penny, over which the rosy fingers were shut jealously.

"Keep your penny, child, and I will buy the lilacs for you."

But she shook her head.

"No; Little Mother was crying this morning when I woke up—did you know grown-up people ever cried?—and she told me it was all because she had no white lilacs on this May-day. Wasn't that a funny thing to cry for? And then she told me she was Queen of the May once, and she had to get down off her throne, and wander away and away from the white lilacs, and out into the cold, dark streets here. I don't think they're cold and dark, do you?" the little thing added, looking up at me in the sunshine.

Suddenly a wondering expression grew in her eyes.

"You are not going to cry, are you?" she asked.

If Little Mother had felt the blank sense of misery which had been closing in and blotting out the bright day from me, as the child prattled on, she would have been too near to despair for tears.

I could only hope her pain was less than mine. The small hand I took into mine had torn open an unhealed wound; and now it must lead me until I could see her Little Mother face to face, and know if it were indeed my lost sweetheart, May Elliston.

"No, no! I am not going to cry," I said. "But I am going home with you to see your Little Mother. See, we will take her all these lilacs."

"Yes, but I must buy them myself," she declared. "I didn't tell her so; but I promised myself to take my bright new penny as soon as I had done my lesson and Little Mother was at her work, and would not miss me."

So the bright new penny was laid down on the counter beside my coin, and the little maid, her pinafore heaped with a gay bunch of daffodils amongst the lilacs, trotted on, her free hand trustingly in mine.

It was not until we were some distance from the stall, and the knot of wayfarers about it, that I could give voice to the questions burning in my heart.

"What is your mother's name?"

"Why, Little Mother, of course! What else should it be?"

"And your own name?"

"Bertie."

"What else?"

"Why, nothing else!" she said with wonder in the uplifted eyes which were so like May's.

My heart grew heavier and heavier. For Bertie was the name of May's scapegrace brother who was lost at sea when my little sweetheart had not much more than entered her teens.

She had all a young girl's romantic devotion to him. What more likely than that she should have named her child after him?

There were ugly stories whispered about of Bertie Elliston before the vessel was wrecked in which he was fleeing from his country—out of reach of the law, it was rumored.

But May would not be sure not to believe the stories; she was never a half-hearted partisan.

If every one had not known that the vessel went down with every soul on board, it might have been supposed that May had gone to her brother somewhere, when, after the death of her grandfather, her last remaining relative, she simply disappeared with the fortune the old man had left her, because he could not carry it in his grasping, miserly hands into the world.

That was just after May and I had had our bitter lover's quarrel; and when I came back to the old village to look for her she had vanished.

And now to find her again—not my May, but this child's mother.

I could not bring myself to question the child about her father. She had a bit of black ribbon tied round her straw hat.

I dared not even think of it. I tried not to think at all, while she drew me gaily on, her feet dancing over the rough ways of the dingy streets, up which she turned, as her bright eyes were dancing over the fragrant blossoms heaped up in her pinafore.

Up the dingy street, up and up the dark stair-case of a dingier house to the very garret floor.

Surely it could never be May Elliston, the heiress, lodged so high as this!

But my small guide was pushing the door open before I could stop her.

"Little Mother!"

There was a slender figure in black, stooping over a long, white seam upon her knees.

It must have been the sun that shone full on the window where she sat which dazzled me, for I seemed to see a halo shining round the drooping golden head, that never lifted, though May's voice—it was May's voice, faltering with the sound of tears in it—answered the child.

"My little Bertie back again already? Why you couldn't have got as far as the park, darling; and it would have done you good to play there in the sunshine. Did dolly get tired and want to get home?"

She was stitching away so busily that she never glanced round.

"I didn't take dolly out to-day, Little Mother. I didn't want dolly. Look and see what I've got here instead!"

"Wait, darling; I am just finishing. Then we'll go out together and take all this work home, and if they pay us this time," this in a lower tone, "we'll get a nice dinner that will make up for the breakfast."

"Little Mother, see!"

The child had slipped behind her, and was showering down the fragrant blossoms over her shoulders into her lap.

"White lilacs!"

It was with a wild sob in her voice that May cried out, and she gathered up the fragrant lilacs and buried her face in them.

When she lifted her face, they were all shining and wet, but not with dew.

And when she lifted her wet eyes, it was straight into mine that they looked.

Slowly she yielded her hand into mine, outstretched for it.

"Donald! After all these years——"

"And changes."

Perhaps my voice was bitter, for after that first impulse to draw her to me, to claim her in spite of everything that had come between, came the revulsion.

I looked down at her black dress, and I seemed to see, under the mocking heap of flowers, and the coarse white work, the little left hand with the wedding-ring upon it.

No, I could not forget that she had forgotten—that she had given herself to some other man.

I touched a fold of the black dress, letting go her hand.

"He is dead, May?" I said.

She gave a startled glance at the child, pressed against her knee, absorbed in bunching the flowers together.

"Yes, he is dead."

And then, very softly, lifting up her lovely eyes to me:

"If you know so much as that of him, Donald, it is likely you know all. But let him memory rest; he was sorry enough at the last."

"Sorry! But first he brought you down to this. Your fortune——"

"Gone!" she said; and with the hand I had let fall she gently stroked the golden head of the little one, intent upon her task, not heeding us. "His child," she said. "Donald, when I am parted with my last sovereign for the simple cross that marks his grave, that 'Sacred to the Memory' made his memory ever sacred to me. So let it rest, untouched by any slightest breath of unkind word."

I looked down into the drooping face of the girl—my May Queen once; and suddenly I knew that, try to dethrone her as I might, she was my queen still and mistress of my fate.

"And because of that stone, sacred to his memory," I said bitterly, "because of that, May, you are going to send me from you again, more wretched than when we quarrelled and parted, years ago?"

"Send you from me again!"

There was a frightened gasp in the sweet voice; and in the blue eyes lifted to me a look that told me I might venture to what thereupon I did—that is, to catch both her hands in mine, to draw her to me, the left hand as well as the right.

Then, suddenly and sharply:

"May, what have you done with your wedding ring?"

"My wedding—ring?"

"Oh, see—all the poor, pretty flowers spilt!" the child broke in, trying to push us back from the fragrant showers lying about our feet. "Oh, Little Mother, see what you have done!"

I felt the start that went through and through May, as I still held her in my arms.

And then she looked up at me, smiling tremulously, blushing ravishingly.

"Ah, now I see what Bertie has done. It is her 'Little Mother' that misled you into fancying I could ever have been false to you! Yes, I am her 'Little Mother'—the only mother she has ever known; for her own mother died before she could remember. She is poor Bertie's child, Donald."

I stooped and caught up the little one rapturously, setting her down again, bewildered and staring, in the midst of her blossoms.

"Blessings on her pretty face! It is just what yours was, May, when I can first remember it."

She shook her head.

"I never could have been as pretty as that," she said simply, lowering her voice that the child should not hear. "But my brother and I were very much alike."

Her voice softened.

"After all, he had never sailed on that ill-fated vessel," she explained. "And when he wrote to me to come to him, after grandpapa's death had left me alone in the world——"

"After it had left you an heiress," I answered, in my own mind, but never from that day to this one syllable of it aloud.

"Of course I went," she continued. "And I had to disappear, for it was not safe for him to be seen by any who had even known him before," she whispered, with a pained glance at the child. "I never thought you would care—we had parted in anger, we two——"

I stopped the last word with my lips on hers; we would never be two again.

She whispered, clinging to me—

"Never ask me of those years, Donald, if you love me. Only, he was sorry—sorry at last."

The tears vanished in sunshine in May's blue eyes as I made her look at the child among the flowers.

"Little Bertie never shall be sorry all her bright life long, if I can prevent it," I said. "I owe her all that fortune can give her for bringing me again too woo my love among the white lilies. Sweetheart, long ago I bought back the old place, for the sake of that white lilac bower, where once—you remember it?—you were enthroned May Queen, and ever since that have been my Queen May. We will be married to-morrow, May, and will go down there while the lilacs are still blooming."

E. E. EAGAN, an electrician of Columbus, O., says he has invented an instrument which will enable vessels at sea to communicate with each other or with the land by the human voice, without regard to distance.

Scientific and Useful.

SCREWS.—It has recently been discovered that screws dipped in a mixture of oil and black lead will not become too rigidly fixed, and will not rust.

WOODITE.—"Woodite" is the name of a new material which possesses the elasticity of rubber without being either inflammable or injured by salt water. It is proposed to use it as a fender on wharves to prevent injury by collision with ships and to protect the unarmored parts of war vessels.

HOLES IN GLASS.—To drill holes in glass a common steel drill, well made and well tempered, is the best tool. The steel should be forged at a low temperature, so as to be sure not to burn it, and then tempered as hard as possible in a bath of salt water that has been well boiled. Such a drill will go through glass very rapidly if kept well moistened with turpentine in which some camphor has been dissolved. Diluted sulphuric acid is equally good, if not better.

TO PRESERVE ROPES.—It has been suggested that in order to ensure greater strength and consequently more safety in ropes used for scaffolding purposes, particularly in localities where the atmosphere is destructive of hemp fibre, they should be dipped when dry into a bath containing twenty grains of sulphate of copper per litre of water, and kept in soak in this solution for about four days. The ropes will thus have absorbed a certain quantity of sulphate of copper, which will preserve them for some time from the attacks of parasites and from rot.

WATER-PROOF PAPER.—Paper can be made waterproof without giving it the character of parchment by dissolving twenty-four ounces of alum and four ounces of white soap in two pounds of water; also two ounces of gum-arabic and six ounces of glue in two pounds of water; the two solutions are to be mixed, and the sheets of paper dipped into the mixture while warm. They are to be then hung up to dry, and pressed. This paper is very useful for packages exposed to the damp, and for any purpose connected with the preservation of articles from moisture.

HINTS.—Bent whalebones can be restored and used again by simply soaking in water a few hours, then drying them. To restore crushed velvet hold it over the spout of the teakettle and let it steam well, then comb up the nap. Brooms dipped for a few minutes in boiling suds once a week will last much longer than they otherwise would. Kid shoes may be kept soft and free from cracks by rubbing them once a week with a little pure glycerine or castor oil. A piece of zinc placed on the coals of a hot stove will clean out the stove-pipe. The vapor produced carries off the soot by chemical decomposition.

Farm and Garden.

POULTRY.—When cleaning the perches in the poultry-house it is necessary to apply the mixture of kerosene oil and grease to the under side as well as the top.

POTTED PLANTS.—If potted plants be watered around the roots with lime-water the angle-worms will be destroyed in the soil. The caustic qualities of the lime-water kill all soft-skinned worms. Only a small amount of the lime-water is necessary.

BEES.—Bees do not work as well in a hive exposed to the sun. In midday, when very hot, all work on the inside, such as comb-building and storing honey, has to be suspended. Sometimes combs melt down, and the brood dies in the heat of the sun.

TREE LAWNS.—The white-leaved and weeping lindens are among the most useful lawn trees for our climate. They are hardy, and injurious insects and destructive diseases appear to pass them by; and, while their growth is quite fast, the foliage of each is singularly beautiful and tenacious.

SEEDS.—Do not be tempted with all the new "novelties" offered in garden-seeds, as some of them are only old varieties with new names. Before devoting the garden to any new variety, give it a test by procuring a packet of seeds for experiment, as a loss from poor seed or from an inferior variety cannot be recovered. Time is an important item in gardening.

HAY-CAPS.—Hay-caps are made of fifty-four-inch heavy sheeting cut into squares and bound with a strong cord, making a loop three or four inches long at each corner. The cloth may be water-proofed very cheaply by steeping it in a solution of alum and thereafter drying it first in a solution of sugar of lead, or the cloth may be dipped in boiled linseed oil and then hung out to dry. The caps are used to cover haycocks, and are fastened down by pins put through the loops and pushed into the hay.

YOUNG AND OLD.—Many carefully conducted experiments have proved beyond a doubt that young animals pay much better for feeding than do those which have long passed their years of growth. If this fact were more generally realized there would be fewer old animals kept, and farmers would change their stock much oftener than has been their practice. Many buyers have already learned better than to ever purchase an old cow or pair of oxen, because they know that no gain in growth can be obtained, only a gain in condition, and this at a cost fully equal to all it will bring when the animal is again offered for sale.

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Wasted Lives.

Thoughtful men have often felt their minds falter when they considered how little Nature seemed to reck concerning the fate of individuals. The type is everything, the individual nothing. In human society no man is necessary—Cæsar, Shakspeare, Newton, Napoleon—all pass away and the world sways on.

In all creation the same lordly inscrutable disregard prevails, and yet not a seed or a lilu of any kind ever came to existence without a miracle. Is it possible that the Power which destroys all but one seed out of a thousand and brings one to bear would willingly waste the nine hundred and ninety-nine?

Wherever we turn we see this apparently unavailing destruction, and irresolute men are often so stunned by the sight of a phenomenon which they cannot understand that they determine not to think any more; they give themselves up to the senses alone, and refuse to let reason guide their actions again.

It would be a useless task to consider the immense destruction which unceasingly goes on over the whole earth, from the peaks of the Andes to the depths of the ocean slime; but we may very profitably speak a little about the wasted lives of human beings whose fate is wrought out from stage to stage before our eyes. Daily we hear the old cry, "What a wasted life!" and the poetic philosophers tell us over and again about the sadness of the "might have been!"

Now in many instances we hold that the waste is only apparent, and not real, while in all cases, without exception, where a life is really wasted, the fault lies with human players who neglected the laws of Nature's game, and lost their lives through disobedience to the rules.

In neither case can we feel regret. In the first instance, if a man gives away his life in a wise effort to perform a noble action, the world gains by his loss; in the second instance, if a player loses the game and his life by neglecting the laws under which he lives, he is better out of the way, for he proves that he is not a being best fitted to continue the race. He is, in short, outmatched in the struggle for existence. Where Nature seems cruel to shallow minds it always happens that the apparent cruelty is a disguised beneficence.

The secret reason of this is that whatever its outward seeming may be, every circumstance of a man's life has an inward effect upon his character. And if this effect is good, the circumstance is not wasted.

Whatever is undergone, whether of vicissitude or labor, has a shaping influence. All labor well and worthily performed is in itself a direct means of elevating and improving. In the first place, it calls forth energy and force, and they grow by exercise. No system of self-culture, however elaborate, can ever give that vigor and tone to the system, or that sense of power to the mind, which comes from regular, well performed labor. To work and endure with a purpose, whether it be at the forge or the shop, in the factory or the office, in the field or the studio, in the kitchen or the schoolroom, gives a conscious ability that nothing else can produce, and that goes far to make the manly and the womanly character. And all that contributes to this end is certainly never wasted.

Nothing is without its special jewel, if only we look for it; and, if we were really wise, we should find its profitable use in each circumstance and event of our lives.

If any mother of thought and character was asked the question, What do you consider the most important quality to be developed in your child's mind? the answer without doubt would be, Truth; for the corner-stone of character is truth, and there can be no true success without it. "Electricity cannot follow a broken wire, nor success a lying life." Without truth there is no development. And how many ways there are of proving, without speaking, that absolute truth is essential in the first steps a baby takes towards learning! Give him a box of blocks to build a house, and you can show him that, unless the first blocks laid on the floor are in line, the whole structure will be crooked; give him a slate, and you can explain to him that in making lines, if the first is not straight, not true, the rest will all follow the first, or the spaces will not be true. In short, you can make clear to him that, in copying any work, exactness is the very foundation of success, and but another name for truth.

There is a general impression that, whatever characteristics may come to be prevalent, that of heroism must always remain exceptional. It is usually associated in the mind with prominent deeds that win universal applause, or great sacrifices that involve endurance of pain or renunciation of pleasure. To average humanity such opportunities seldom come, and it is therefore supposed that only the few can lead heroic lives. Yet it is quite clear that these circumstances cannot create the heroism; they can only call it forth if it is there; and, if this be so, it must exist independent of circumstances. It is true that the heroic element in a man will enable him to do great deeds and endure great suffering if need be; but, when he is not called upon for these, he does not cease to be a hero. On the other hand, the same actions may be performed and sacrifices made without any heroism at all. It is the character that lies underneath that is heroic or unheroic.

Whether consciously or not, we may be hourly preparing ourselves for sudden actions. Whether we shall meet the emergencies of life, its powerful temptations, its impulsive attractions, its momentous crises, with courage or cowardice, with strength or weakness, with self-control or self-indulgence, depends far less on the immediate incentive than upon the habit of life which has preceded it. It is upon the reiterated choices of good or evil that we are continually making in daily life that the quality of our sudden and momentous deeds depends, and the praise or blame that is given to the latter is even more strictly due to the former, and to all the decisions and actions of daily life which are so often deemed trifling and insignificant.

The higher graces of life belong in a most peculiar manner to its latter days. True goodness, based upon and growing out of inherent worthiness, improves, like some kinds of our native fruit, with keeping; but, unlike the fruit, which cannot be kept to advantage beyond a certain length of time, goodness improves and even increases in the ratio of the prolongation of its existence. It increases in quality too as well as in quantity. A heartsome smile is sweet on the face of seventeen—it is winsome and captivating; but upon the face of seventy, if the thoughts and feelings have been of the best, it is the most attractive thing imaginable.

Homes are made sweet by simplicity and freedom from affectation, and these are also the qualities that put guests at their ease and make them feel at home. When they are absent we take our pleasures sadly. A lady took a world of trouble to provide a variety of dishes and have all cooked with great skill for an entertainment, which she was to give in honor of Dean Swift; but, from the first bit that was tasted, she did not cease to undervalue the courses and to beg indulgence for the shortcomings of the cook. "Hang it," said Swift, after the annoyance had gone on a little, "if everything is so bad as you say, I'll go home and get a herring dressed for myself!"

Trained heads, polished manners and accumulated wealth may all be good things, but they are not the qualities that can make a trustworthy and honorable man nor a solid and safe community. The cultivation of the mind and senses may lead a man to be shrewd, keen, elegant, courteous, but it never has led, and it never will lead, a man or a class to be unselfish, self-sacrificing, self-denying, humble and virtuous. The virtues of the intellect are not the virtues of the soul, and the latter are not to be found in grammar or arithmetic.

Apologies are not so common as formerly. They are very seldom in place. An old statement about them will bear repetition. A sermon both short and good is perfect, and needs no apology. A short, poor sermon has an apology for its poorness in its brevity. A long, good sermon has an apology for its length in its goodness. But a long, poor sermon admits of no apology, and the attempt to make one makes it both longer and poorer. Therefore proceed to business without apology.

Self-possession is an important element of a successful manner—"Be self-possessed, that is the only art of life," says Mephistopheles to Faust—and shyness or self-consciousness is, more than anything else, detrimental to ease of manner. This commonest of defects, which may be largely increased or counteracted by early influence and training, is however in many cases constitutional and unconquerable.

Character is property. It is the noblest of possessions. It is an estate in the general goodwill and respect of men; and they who invest in it, though they may not become richer in this world's goods, will find their reward in the esteem and reputation fairly and honorably won. And it is right that in life good qualities should tell, that industry, virtue and goodness should rank the highest, and that the really best men should be the foremost.

Real enjoyment consists far more in the proper balance of all the faculties than in the larger development of any one alone. For instance, the ardent pursuit of knowledge, valuable though it be, if carried on to the exclusion of a due regard for health, or to the neglect of practical duties that press upon the conscience, not only defeats what is superior to itself, but digs away the foundation upon which it is standing.

Manners are an art. Some are perfect, some commendable; but there are none that are of no moment. How comes it that we have no precepts by which to teach them, or at least no rule whereby to judge them as we judge sculpture and music. A science of manners would be more important to the virtue and happiness of men than one would suppose.

This world is a dream within a dream, and as we grow older each step is an awakening. The youth awakes as he thinks from childhood; the full-grown man despises the pursuits of youth as visionary; and the old man looks on manhood as a feverish dream. Death the last sleep? No, it is the last and final awakening.

The highest use of a friend is his friendship, and in some respects a friendly book is the very best of friends. Speech is silver, silence is golden. A book is a bimetallic friend; it will give you either silver speech or golden silence, as you prefer.

The way to cultivate courage: First, by standing firm on some conscientious principle, some law or duty; next, by being faithful to truth and right on small occasions and common events; third, by trusting God for help and power.

The World's Happenings.

A puppy stew is a royal feast in Zanzibar.

An 18-year-old hen recently died at Oskaloosa, Ia.

Miss Alice R. Jordan, LL. D., of Yale, is only 23.

Fresh water is sold in Hurley, Wis., at 25 cents a barrel.

Paris is said to consume nearly fifty tons of snails in a season.

A Stockton, Cal., bootblack carries a box that is covered with silver plate.

It is proposed to forbid the sale of cigarettes to minors in Richmond, Va.

Henry Ward Beecher is reported to have made $250,000 out of his lecture tours.

A man in Ionia, Mich., has a turkey which has been trained to draw a sled.

A printers' monthly journal, calling itself the "Devil," has just been started.

The largest farm in the world is in Louisiana, and comprises 1,500,000 acres of land and swamp.

The ages combined of a couple married out in Mecosta county, Mich., the other day, foot up 137 years.

African epicures think a tender young monkey, highly seasoned and baked gipsy fashion in the earth, makes a first-class dinner.

John Sherman, of Ohio, has put away $2,000,000, which it is popularly believed he has saved out of his salary as United States Senator.

A dog case in Boone county, Ia., is now on its sixth trial, having had two before a Justice and three before the District Court. The dog is dead.

In 1886 there were 1,901 strikes; in 1885 only 223. In 1886 there were 729 successful strikes, increasing wages $387,679; the loss of wages by strikes was $2,658,191.

Henry Dodson, of Kentucky, convicted of being a vagrant, has been ordered to be sold to the highest bidder at public auction to serve for a period of 75 days.

A boy of Manistique, Mich., put on three pairs of trousers and went to school prepared to receive a promised whipping. The teacher beat him on the hand with a ruler.

A Louisville colored woman has sold her grandchild to a white woman for $150, and as the little one has fallen into good hands there will probably be no effort to interfere with the bargain.

An anti-secret society conference, for which the president and several professors of Princeton College and many prominent clergymen have signed the call, is to be held March 30th in Chicago.

In Prussia more than one-half of the country is owned by people whose yearly income ranges from $75 to $471, and 85 per cent of the property is owned by those who are comparatively poor.

The body of a man who was found dead on the meadows at Newark, N. J., recently, has been overmuch identified. Two women believe it was their husband, and one man is positive that it was his father.

A patent that has been taken out by a Toledo man converts crude oil into fuel in a way that gets as much heat, he claims, out of one barrel of oil (worth about 70 cents) as six tons of bituminous coal will yield.

An agricultural paper figures it that "when land is worth $30 an acre, one glass of beer at five cents would represent a piece of land nine feet wide and twelve long. Room enough to bury the whole family in."

A cow belonging to S. M. Teachout, of Coldwater, Mich., opened the door of her owner's house one night recently, climbed the stairs and took a nap in the spare bed-room, where she was found the next morning.

A Montana man, who recently arrived in Chicago and sold five car-loads of cattle, brought up a little later in a police court, after "doing the town," with a balance of 75 cents from the thousands of dollars he got for his cattle.

In a trial before a justice of the peace at Lead City, D. T., and during the temporary absence of the Court, the plaintiff whipped the defendant while the attorneys kept the crowd back. The Court then returned and the trial proceeded.

During the past year there were recorded in New York city 22,000 baptisms of Roman Catholic children. The entire number of births was 31,319, showing that two-thirds of the number of children were of Roman Catholic parentage.

Dr. B. C. Rogers, who died last month at Quincy, Mich., devised that his estate should be sold, and after providing for some private bequests, distributed in the discretion of the executors among women of family whose husbands are drunkards.

Free ferries are being established across the Thames at London. The first is expected to go into operation in the spring, with two steamers large enough for the conveyance at one time of several vehicles and horses and some hundreds of passengers.

With snow in Baltimore, the mercury 45 degrees below zero in Montana, sunny skies in Florida, a man killed by lightning in Indiana, and loud thunder in Pennsylvania, all in one day, some idea can be obtained of the decided promiscuousness of American weather.

A prisoner who had been discharged from a court in New York city, recently, through a confusion of names, returned, after he had been out of court and gave himself up, remarking that he did not want to see an innocent man suffer. The Judge intimated that he would discharge him as soon as his case came up regularly.

Fifteen years ago Jefferson Miller, of Jeffersonville, Ind., while feeding a threshing machine, saw a rat run across the barn floor. In turning to watch the rat he permitted his left hand to be pulled into the machine, and it was torn off. The other day while again feeding a threshing machine in the same barn a rat ran between his feet. He kicked at it and fell, and his right hand was caught and torn off.

THE MESSENGERS.

BY WM. W. LONG.

Will you tell her, will you tell her,
Spring's sweet songsters, merry birds,
In your soft and tender language,
Of my love in your own words?
Bear my message, birdies, to her,
I my love to you confessed;
Then bring back her answer to me,
Answer that will make me blessed.

Violets by the tinghing streamlet,
When she comes to pluck your bloom,
Tell to her my love—it is sweet,
With its fragrance fill her room.
You will know her by her beauty,
When she comes across the lea;
Lift your blue eyes up in worship,
Give love's message thus from me.

Wind, you merry, roguish rover,
Singing softly from the sea;
Leave your roses and your blue-bells,
Go and kiss my love for me.
And while kissing, whisper softly
My love message, for you know,—
Kiss and clasp her and caress her,
Then come tell may I do so.

A Drawn Game.

BY CURTIS YORKE.

EDGAR ALLEN JOHNSON was sitting on a May afternoon, in the private room of his office in Exchange Court, in the city of Liverpool. The sunlight shotted across a sleek brown head, and made the splendid diamond which adorned the little finger of his left hand sparkle.

Mr. Johnson's was an aristocratic hand, slender and white, for the possession of which he was indebted to some remote ancestor whose name was not Johnson. "Gentleman" was stamped upon every feature of his calm, clean-shaved expressionless face. "Scoundrel," by some unaccountable omission on the part of Nature, was not written there. His features, though well-shaped, were small.

After a time he desisted from his occupation of absently covering the blotting-pad before him with tiny ink-dots, and rising abruptly, took up his position on the hearth-rug, with his back to the fireplace.

He was a tall man, slimly built, with a well-poised head and square shoulders; and as the light fell more strongly upon his face it was noticed that his eyes—which were blue, and very closely set together—were clear and guileless as a little child's.

He found those eyes very useful on occasion; useful beyond the ordinary use of eyes. They were eyes that could look straight into yours, while their owner was concocting or relating, statements or incidents which might be absolutely false. They had had a good deal of practice.

He was thirty years old; and during all his life he had never yet told the truth when a lie would do as well.

The glib falsehood flowed from his tongue with a smoothness and air of truth which would have deceived, and did deceive, the most wary and suspicious of the fascinating Johnson's friends and associates.

In the eyes of the commercial world Mr. Johnson was a rich man. In the eyes of his confidential clerk and himself, his firm was to-day on the brink of ruin. Nothing short of a miracle could save it, and Edgar knew that the day of miracles was past.

He was evidently thinking deeply as he stood there on this May afternoon. His forehead was contracted, his thin, well-cut lips pressed closely together. Suddenly an indescribable agitation passed over his features, accompanied with a quiver slight and fleeting as the trembling of a calm lake stirred by some passing breeze. He advanced quickly towards the table, and touched a small bell which stood thereon.

A clerk entered the room.

"Saunders—a hansom."

"Yes, sir;" and the door closed again.

Mr. Johnson got into his light overcoat, drew on his gloves in the calm, gentlemanly manner in which he did most things took up his hat and stick, went down stairs and leisurely entered the hansom, which he directed to a certain house in James Street.

In a few minutes the hansom stopped at a dingy ground floor office in James Street. The most prosperous firms sometimes carry on their operations in the dingiest of offices, and the firm of "Levi, Dorrell & Co.," brokers and shipowners, bore this out faithfully. It was a very prosperous firm, and had during the past year made some very lucky speculations.

Mr. Johnson, having instructed the cabman to wait, threaded the tortuous maze of passages which led to the sanctuary where Levi and Co. transacted their mighty business and made their piles of gold.

He handed his card to the sunny-looking clerk, and after a minute's delay was shown into the room where, in attitudes of conscious wealth and power, sat the senior partner, Mr. Levi, and his colleague, Mr. Dorrell.

Mr. Levi was short, stout, dark, with the features of his race, and an eye which in a horse would have been called "wicked." Mr. Dorrell was also dark, but tall and thin, well-shaped and gentlemanly. The third occupant of the room, seated at a distant desk in a corner, was a Mr. Skimp—presumably the "Co."

He was however a mere echo of the two senior partners, and never appeared to take any active part in the business of the firm. He did not even look up as Mr. Johnson entered, but went on writing with a very audible quill-pen.

Mr. Levi and Mr. Dorrell were rather impressed by the manner and bearing of their visitor, who had an air of deferential yet dignified courtesy which told in his favor at once. His voice, as he remarked upon the chilliness of the weather for the season of the year, had a silvery high-bred tone which was not the least striking of his many charms. The partners were surprised to learn that he was only a cotton-broker. After a few preliminary remarks—in which as his name, calling, and place of business were chiefly concerned, Mr. Johnson did not find it necessary to employ his inventive talent—he proceeded to enter into particulars of his projected business with Levi and Co.

"I understand, Mr. Levi," he said, with his clear blue eyes fixed upon the "glittering monocule" which added lustre and efficacy to Mr. Levi's left eye, "that you grant advances upon cargoes in transit, if shipped in your vessels. I think," he continues deprecatingly, "I need not mention the position my firm holds in the mercantile world; but, like many others in these times my capital is locked up to a degree which prevents my extending my business as I should like."

"Quite so," assented Mr. Dorrell blandly.

"Quite so," said a faint echo-like voice from the corner desk.

Mr. Levi bowed slightly and indicated a wish that Mr. Johnson should proceed. Mr. Johnson crossed one leg lightly over the other, and went on—

"I have been in the habit of shipping cotton from Alexandria by the vessels of Jones & Co.; but if you, gentleman, can see your way to make me the necessary advances on cargoes, I propose transferring my business to your firm. At present I have two thousand bales of cotton ready to ship here from Alexandria, for which I want an advance of twenty thousand pounds. This only, of course, on your receipt of the usual bills of lading from Alexandria; and," with a courtly bow, "should you desire to make any inquiries regarding the standing of my firm, etc., I trust that you will find all things satisfactory."

"We know your firm well by reputation, Mr. Johnson," said Mr. Levi, "though we have not had the pleasure of knowing you personally until to-day."

"Then," said Mr. Dorrell, "after due inquiries—which in your case, Mr. Johnson, are a mere matter of form—we shall be pleased to make you the required advance, on receipt of the formal bills of lading from our agents in Alexandria."

Mr. Johnson bowed gracefully and took his departure.

That night Mr. Johnson had important business which detained him in his private office until the small hours of the morning. He was writing; not in his usual rapid and continuous style, but laboriously and haltingly.

Had you stood behind his chair for a second, you would have seen that he was carefully copying a signature, which read thus:—"Abdul Pinero." He spared no pains with his work, and it was long after midnight when he leaned back in his chair and inspected the result of his labors with keen scrutiny and critical approval. The imitation was perfect. It had been a troublesome signature to copy.

Abdul had an awkward trick of spreading the capital P backwards, and entwining it around his Christian (!) name, in a style which was rather a ticklish thing to imitate; but it was not too ticklish for Edgar Allen Johnson—few things were. Having locked this precious document, with a duplicate—and also the genuine bill of lading from which he had copied the signature—carefully into his safe, he tore up and burnt the various spoiled and smeared sheets of paper which lay about the floor. Then he turned out the lights, locked the door, and went down stairs.

As he walked along the almost deserted street he took out a cigar and lit it. And as the match sprung into sudden brilliancy, it lighted up his face, and showed that the expression on every feature was as serene and tranquil as if his night's work had not been the preparation for a dastardly crime. He did not go direct home, but strolled down by the river, and finished two more cigars.

He carelessly threw a shilling to a little crouching blue-lipped beggar-lad who stood shivering in the chill May wind on the pavement.

"God bless you, sir," gasped the astonished waif gratefully.

Two days later he received a note from Messrs. Levi and Co. requesting him to call—a request with which he lost no time in complying. The interview was brief and conceded all he wished. The firm was willing to grant him the advance he required—upon receipt of the duplicate bills of lading from Alexandria, which they now awaited.

Mr. Johnson took his leave, and repaired to his office, where he told one of his clerks in a preoccupied tone, to address an envelope to Messrs. Levi and Co. He subsequently placed in this envelope the forged bill of lading, and sealed it up.

Then he wrote a long gossipy letter to a friend in Alexandria—an easy-going, "head-in-the-clouds" kind of a fellow, who would suspect nothing—and in a postscript asked him, as a special favor, to post the enclosed letter for him in Alexandria on the day when the ship Estrella was "cleared." Having despatched this letter, he strolled along to Castle Street, and gave orders at a certain shop where he was not in the habit of dealing—for a small iron-bound box to be made and sent to his rooms, with as little delay as possible.

Three weeks later Mr. Johnson was again in Messrs. Levi and Co.'s office. The bill of lading had been received; and, all preliminaries having been satisfactorily arranged, and the necessary documents as to interest having been duly signed, Mr. Levi drew his cheque-book towards him, and signed a cheque for twenty thousand pounds.

"And I trust, Mr. Johnson," he said pompously, as he tore off the precious slip, "that though it is our first transaction, it may not be our last."

"Our last!" repeated the echo in the corner.

Mr. Johnson bowed with grace; but as he took the paper from Mr. Levi's hand, that gentleman might have noticed that Johnson's hands shook.

The Estrella was signaled in due course; and Messrs. Levi and Co. despatched a clerk to the docks for the ship's papers.

The captain was on deck as the clerk—who, by the way, was named Davis—crossed the gangway.

"Good morning, Captain Marsh," he said pleasantly.

"Good morning," returned the Captain gruffly.

"Had a fine passage?" pursued Davis.

"Middling. Roughish in the Bay."

"Rather a heavy cargo this time, haven't you?"

"No, lighter than usual," was the reply.

"But," said Davis, with an air of surprise, "you've got two thousand bales of cotton on board from Pinero and Co."

"Haven't a bale of cotton on board," returned the other briefly.

"What!" said the astonished clerk. "Are you sure?"

"Sure? Of course I'm sure," answered the captain, in surly tones. "Who should know, if I don't?"

"Well, I may just go back again," said Davis.

"You'd better," observed Captain Marsh grimly; "you'll not find what you're looking for here."

Davis made his way back to his employer's office, and with considerable trepedition informed them of the non-arrival of the expected cargo. Dorrell turned pale, and Levi became perfectly green.

"There must be some mistake!" said the former, hurriedly.

"I don't know, I'm sure, sir," stammered the clerk.

"Don't know, you idiot!" roared Mr. Levi. "Who expected you to know? Leave the room!"

A hurried telegram was despatched to the agents in Alexandria; and in the course of a few hours the terse answer was flashed back—

"No such consignment despatched to you. Some mistake."

The partners looked at each other—aghast!

"What!" gasped Mr. Levi.

"Good gracious!" ejaculated Mr. Dorrell.

"Good gracious!" echoed the Co.

In five minutes Mr. Levi was driving furiously up to Exchange Court; where it is needless to say he did not find Mr. Johnson. Nor did he find any one else connected with the firm. The door leading to the offices were locked; and a card neatly tacked thereon, bearing the inscription—

"On the Continent for an indefinite time."

Upon reading this announcement Mr. Levi burst into the next office with such sudden violence that the clerks jumped from their stools in dismay. Here he learnt in answer to his almost inarticulate inquiries, that the offices of Johnson and Co. had been closed for rather more than a week.

Upon arriving again in James Street, Mr. Levi was in a state of agonized rage and excitement baffling description. He was a singularly choleric old gentleman; and threw himself into his chair, flinging his hat upon the ground.

"We've been swindled!" he almost shouted, excitedly. "Swindled!"

"Swindled!" echoed the "Co." faintly.

Mr. Dorrell sat for a few minutes pale and silent; but in all firms of two or more partners there is usually one who talks, and one who acts; and in this firm Mr. Dorrell was always the one who acted.

"We had better send for Bolton," he said at last; and Bolton, the celebrated detective was sent for.

Bolton said little, but listened gravely and respectfully to Mr. Dorrell's calm statements, and with seeming sympathy to Mr. Levi's incoherent ravings. Mr. Skimp meekly ventured the remark that "he hain't thought much of Johnson from the first," which irritating remark was repaid by the senior partner with a withering glance at Skimp, which caused that worthy to subside at once into his corner.

All the documents were produced, and most carefully examined by Bolton. The detective—after the manner of his kind—looked inscrutable, and said very little.

The affair was placed entirely in his hands, and after some days' inquiry the firm of Levi and Co. found that they had been very successfully swindled, all the documents being forgeries. Mr. Levi's cheque had been cashed on the day it was received; all in Bank of England notes, none of which had been passed or changed in Liverpool.

The inference was that Mr. Johnson had taken them with him to London, with the intention of changing them into gold. It was for this purpose, Mr. Bolton said, that the previously mentioned iron-bound box had been ordered by the thoughtful and accomplished Mr. Johnson (twenty thousand pounds in gold being, as the detective remarked dryly, rather an awkward sum to carry about on the person.) It was also ascertained that Mr. Johnson had left his room more than a week ago, at a late hour in the evening; and that a gentleman answering his description had, on that same evening, taken the night express for London. Upon hearing these details Mr. Levi delivered himself of some fine Hebrew expletives.

"But how," said Mr. Dorrell, "did he get Pinero's signature to copy?"

"A simple matter," replied the detective. "He had had some small shipping transactions with Pinero & Co. before; which enabled him to possess himself of one or two of their forms of bills of lading. This plot was not hatched in a few days."

"The scoundrel!" stormed Mr. Levi—with several strong and effective adjectives—"I'll trace him, I'll hunt him down, if I spend every penny I have in the world. Find him, Bolton, and I'll make your fortune."

Mr. Bolton did his best, and it was usually a very good "best." He traced him first to London, then to Paris, then to Irun, and thus across the Spanish frontier, beyond which of course it was useless to follow him. The celebrated detective therefore returned to Liverpool, baffled and considerably crestfallen; and presented himself once again in Messrs. Levi and Co.'s office, and with unwelcome tidings.

"Follow him through Spain, drag him back by force—drag him to the dock!" almost screamed Mr. Levi.

"Dock!" echoed Mr. Skimp faintly.

Mr. Dorrell and Mr. Bolton, between them, evolved a subtler plan, which was finally adopted.

"Spare no expense," were Mr. Dorrell's last words to the detective. "We give you carte blanche—but, bring him back with you."

"I will do my best," said Mr. Bolton, and bowed himself out.

* * * * * * *

Two men were lounging, one hot August evening, on the verandah of the Fonda Alhamoda at Malaga. Both were smoking; and from their conversation, they were evidently recent acquaintances.

"Yes," the elder of the two men was saying, with a strong American twang, "I'm travelling for pleasure. I've made a pretty tall sum in mining, and I mean to enjoy myself. I intend running pretty well over Europe during the next month. I don't take sudden fancies, now, as a rule," he went on, "but I've taken a fancy to you. I like your sort. What did you say your name was?"

"I didn't say," answered the other, in clear, high-bred tones; "but my name is Frederick Steyne."

"Thank you. Mine is Kemp—Josiah Washington Kemp—at your service. Here's my card. You are an Englishman, I calculate?"

"Yes. You are an American, I presume?"

"That's so," returned the other, sticking his thumbs in the arm-holes of his waistcoat—"Josiah Washington Kemp of New York City—United States. I guess you are traveling for pleasure too, Mr. Steyne?"

"Well—no," said the person addressed, carefully selecting a fresh cigar; "I am only here on a little matter of business. A relative of mine—an uncle, in fact—died here lately, and left me a small fortune. I thought of starting business either here or in Seville." And Mr. Steyne's blue eyes, as he spoke, looked clear and guileless as a child's.

He was a tall, well-made man, with a short fair beard, and a heavy fair moustache. His manners were winning exceedingly; his hands were slender and white, with albert nails.

His companion was tall too, but stoutish and dark, with a clean-shaved lip and jaw, and a pointed black beard. He looked at Mr. Steyne attentively as that gentleman nonchalantly lit his cigar. He admired the perfect repose of his manner—his utter tranquility and self-possession.

"I feel we are going to be friends," he said, as Mr. Steyne handed him a cigar from an exquisitely mounted case. "I'm sorry now we didn't get to know each other sooner. I've been here for three days."

Then he went on to give his companion a frank and rambling account of his life and adventures, and how he had made his "pile." Altogether he was very communicative. And Mr. Steyne soon became confidential too; telling how he had come out to Spain six years before; how he had lived for the last three years in extreme poverty and ill-health, and how thankfully he hailed the small windfall which had lately befallen him.

He spoke, too, in affecting terms of a much-loved younger brother, who had died of cholera during the preceding summer, and whose death had been an acute and terrible grief to him.

"You haven't been in England lately, I suppose?" said Mr. Kemp, looking attentively at a very pretty little Spanish girl who was crossing the street below.

"Oh, no," replied the other. "I have not seen England since I left it six years ago. I hadn't the means, even had I wished it; besides, I have no longer any interests there."

As he spoke he flicked the ash from off his cigar, and sighed.

"Ah," said the American.

They talked on different subjects until the clock struck eleven; then they parted for the night.

As the days went on they became fast friends apparently, and the one was rarely seen without the other.

"Look here, Steyne, my boy," said Mr. Kemp one afternoon, as they sat in the shady verandah, "I have an idea!"

"Surely—for Mr. Kemp—that is nothing uncommon," observed Mr. Steyne with a courteous smile.

"I've been thinking," went on Mr. Kemp. "You say you have not seen much of Madrid. Neither have I; and I guess it's rather

an interesting little place. Why shouldn't we take a run up there together; not straight up, but doing all the places of interest on the way?"

"My dear sir," said Mr. Steyne, blowing a tiny curl of smoke into the air as he spoke "you have misunderstood me, I fear. The little sum my uncle left me—though a fortune to me—does not admit of such extravagance as you mention. Much as I should enjoy the trip you propose——"

"Pooh!" broke in the other brusquely, "don't have any nonsense. My dear Fred—excuse me calling you Fred; you're so like a friend I once had of that name, I can't look on you as a stranger—I've more money than I know what to do with. Let me do the thing—I guess you'll be doing me a favor—it's flat enough travelling alone; and I tell you I don't know when I felt so drawn to any one before. That's so."

Mr. Steyne at this moment was leaning his elbow upon the back of his chair; his clear eyes fixed unwaveringly on the eager good-natured face of his companion. It was an intense, penetrating gaze; and the American, after a second or two, said with not unnatural surprise—

"What are you looking at?"

"I was trying to remember who you remind me of," said the other, "I know now."

Mr. Kemp poured out a full glass of Manzanilla, and took a long drink before he spoke.

"Yes?" he said then, interrogatively.

"It was," went on Steyne dreamily, "up in Santander. A man was killed there some months ago; he was knocked down by a runaway horse. Your face reminds me of his."

"Ah!" said the other. "Well, what do you say to my little scheme? Will you come?"

"My dear fellow," replied Mr. Steyne objectively, "I really should enjoy it extremely, but——"

"Then that's settled," said the American, in brisk tones. "No, I'll take no refusal. We'll start this very day, or to-morrow. We'll have a right royal time; and we'll give the Spaniards fits all around."

Mr. Steyne made no further objections. They did start the next day; and they certainly had a royal time. They went from Malaga, to Granada, Cordova, Seville, Badajos, Ciudad-Real and Toledo, and took countless other places in route. They visited the Alhambra by moonlight; they ogled lovely black-eyed senoritas; they attended bull fights by day, and masked balls by night; and they spent money like water. Finally they arrived in Madrid and took up their quarters at the Fonda de Parris, in the Puerta del Sol.

On the second day after their arrival in the Spanish capital, Mr. Kemp, who had been out for some time, entered the cool marble-tiled apartment where his travelling companion was stretched upon two chairs, with a cigar between his lips, and a small glass of curacoa at his elbow, and said in accents of pleased surprise—

"Now isn't this the most fortunate thing? I've just had this"—holding out an open letter "sent on from Toledo. It's from an old friend of mine—a countryman, too—he's been yachting about for the last few months and is going to put in at Bayonne. He's very anxious I should meet him there, and take a short cruise; and when he hears we are together, he'll be just as pleased to see you; he's a regularly hospitable fellow, and as rich as a Jew. Let me see, now," running his eye over the letter; "we'll have just about time to get up there by the time he arrives. We'll start at once. He says he has some very pretty girls on board, too. Why, Fred, it'll be a considerable bit of fun."

"I hope you will enjoy your cruise, Kemp, my dear fellow," said Mr. Steyne; "but I am sorry I cannot accompany you. I must really get back to Malaga this week. I was just thinking so when you came in."

"Pooh," returned the other, "a couple of weeks or so won't make much difference. Your business can stand, I guess. We'll give up our rooms to-night, and start in the morning."

"No, really," persisted Mr. Steyne, "I couldn't think of intruding on your friend's little circle. It's very kind of you, Mr. Kemp; but, really—I had rather not."

"Oh, bosh! I won't take any denial," said Mr. Kemp, good-humoredly. "If you were once there, I bet I wouldn't get you away again in a hurry," he went on, with a sly wink. "All the women would fall down and worship that Senor Ingles way you have. You're a sad fellow among the ladies, Fred."

But "Fred's" mind was made up apparently. Malaga, and not Bayonne, was his "ultima Thule"; and not all the American's persuasions, remonstrances, and finally bad language, had any effect upon his determination.

"But—hang it all—why not?" said Mr. Kemp in exasperated tones, as he sat astride on a chair, leaning his chin on the back, and looking puzzled and mortified.

"Shall I tell you?" said the other, settling himself more comfortably in his chair, and leisurely lighting a fresh cigar. "I think you'll admit my reasons are good ones. Have a cigar?"

"No," impatiently. "Well—your reasons?"

Mr. Steyne examined the end of his cigar attentively, and then, said fixing his clear eyes on his companion—

"I am indebted to you for the most enjoyable trip I ever had. You have been most generous—princely, indeed. I think I may say I shall never forget you; and should we meet again—which, unhappily, is, I fear, a remote chance—I trust we may renew our—hitherto—very pleasant intercourse——"

"Yes—yes, that's all very well," interrupted Mr. Kemp, with a wave of his hand. "But it's not to the point. I want to know why you won't go."

"I'm coming to that," said the other tranquilly. "Unforeseen accidents sometimes happen. Your friend's yacht, for instance, might take a run over to England—while I was on board. Now, the climate of England doesn't suit me. That is one reason. The other reason is this. I like you—nay, I am fond of you—as Mr. Kemp, the American, in Spain—but," in slow, deliberate tones, "I don't think I should like you quite so well as Mr. Bolton, the detective—across the frontier!"

For fully a minute there was a dead silence. Mr. Kemp—or rather Mr. Bolton—rose from his chair, and moved mechanically to the window. He felt literally stunned and speechless with rage and chagrin—added to the mortifying consciousness of being so completely "done" as if he had been the veriest novice in his profession.

"You look faint," observed his companion courteously. "Pray allow me to ring for some brandy. It will only be a small item in Messrs. Levi and Co.'s already—I fear—rather heavy expenses!"

Mr. Bolton felt as if he could cheerfully have strangled the calm, polished, gentlemanly-looking villain, who leant back in his chair with such easy, unstudied grace, and with that half-mocking smile in his deceitfully frank eyes.

"You are an infernal scoundrel, Mr. Johnson!" he gasped, as soon as he could speak—shaken out of all his usual imperturbable self-possession.

Mr. Johnson shrugged his shoulders gently.

"Possibly," he answered, with an exasperating smile. "Had I been otherwise, I will conclude that you would not have taken quite such an interest in me. Do have a cigar; you will find them really good. No? Then have a turn outside. You look rather upset."

Mr. Bolton left Madrid within an hour, but—he did not join his friend at Bayonne.

A Shadowy Triumph.

BY R. P.

OUR villa has a garden and lawn that slope down to the brink of old Father Thames.

The June roses nod their fragrant heads in at the window, and the warm sunlight streams past them into the drawing-room.

I am singing the "Shadow Song," from the opera of "Dinorah" (perhaps I ought to say I am trying to sing it): my sister Poll is playing it on the piano; we hear our brother Jake whistling it on the tennis green.

I think we are all "Dinorah" demented. Two nights ago a friend had taken us to the Italian Opera at Covent Garden, to hear Madame Patti in "Dinorah." Of course, we were enraptured, and had thought of nothing else since.

Madame Patti's performance had literally taken me by storm, for I am passionately fond of music. "Dinorah" is such a charming opera. The heroine is a poor peasant-girl, who believes her lover has deserted her; she goes mad, and wanders in the moonlit wood, dancing with, and talking to, her shadow. On one occasion she sings to her shadowy companion. This is called the "Shadow Song." The first verse is thus translated:—

"Lovely shadow, leave me not;
Ah! fly not—no, no, no!
Fairy or vision, graceful being,
Go not hence—no, no, no!"

"Hold your row, Madge," cries Jake, impatiently, as he looks in at the open window "and come to play tennis with me."

"It is too hot, Jake," I answer; "and I do so love to practice the "Shadow Song."

"Adelina's blood would curdle if she heard you," says our brother with a sneer. "Have you deluded yourself that you can sing? Come into the garden, Poll and leave Madge with her shadow of a song."

They leave me alone, and I lie down on the sofa.

"It was too bad of Jake to sneer at my singing," I murmur, discontentedly, as I lie staring at the bright stream of sunlight that the lowered Venetian shutters admit into the room. I regard fixedly the beautiful June roses we are so proud of, especially a magnificent Glory of Dijon, occupying the centre, and overtopping her array of lovely companions, as an orchestra conductor does the instrumentalists.

The timepiece ticks monotonously for some time. Poll and Jake suddenly return.

"Madge," says Jake, penitently, "I do believe I have discovered that your voice marvellously resembles that of Adelina Patti. Now, I want to try an experiment."

"Yes," adds Poll, approvingly, "I have persuaded Jake to bring his magic-lantern. We'll soon show you what we are going to do."

Jake darkens the room by closing the shutters; then from his magic lantern he throws a large disc of light on a bare part of the wall. Poll began to play the accompaniment of Dinorah's "Shadow Song."

"Now, old girl," says Jake, "come along with your inimitable imitation of Adelina Patti. I know she would shake in her shoes at Covent Garden if she heard you."

I need no second bidding. When my shadow is thrown on the bright disc I feel inspired, and sing in a manner that surprises myself. Poll and Jake seem to enjoy it, and applaud me heartily.

I am startled, however, when a strange, desperate-looking man emerges from a place of concealment behind a draught screen.

Poll rushes away in terror. No wonder. He is a big burly man with a ferocious moustache, just what I often imagine an operatic manager to be like.

"Are you going to tell me unblushingly that you have been eavesdropping?" I demand.

"Yes, madam, and never in all my life was I so fortunate. I am a desperate man. But don't be alarmed; I am not a burglar, nor anything of that kind."

"Indeed, sir. You may not be aware that we quiet-living suburban residents consider the practice of eavesdropping rather dishonorable."

"Don't be angry, madam," says the desperate man; "I am well-nigh distracted. 'Dinorah' is to be played to-night in my opera house at Covent Garden, and here is a telegram from my prima donna announcing that, on account of a very sudden and very severe attack of hoarseness, she will be unable to sing. What am I to do? I cannot change the opera at the last minute, for that has been done so often of late, and the public are beginning to lose confidence in my advertisement. One hour hence the audience will begin to assemble; half an hour later they will show noisy signs of impatience; then they will clamor for their money back, and the reputation of my opera house will be ruined."

"What have we got to do with all that rigmarole?" says Jake, regarding the intruder with unfriendly looks. "Can't you get one of your other prima donnas to sing for you? I am sure you advertise no end of madams and signoras."

"The public will accept no one in the place of Adelina Patti," says the manager in despair. "They might tolerate Albani if she could take the high F in the 'Shadow Song,' but she can't, and she thinks it beneath her to sing transposed music. What am I to do if you, madam, don't extricate me from this difficulty?"

"Could I help you in any way?" I ask, greatly surprised.

"Yes; you can," he answers earnestly.

"How?"

"You might take the place of Madame Patti."

"I? You are mocking me, sir. If they—I mean the audience—will accept no other popular member of your distinguished company as a substitute for Patti, how will they receive an outsider like me?"

"Because they will never know," he declares. "I want you to impersonate Madame Patti. Your figure and your features are singularly like hers."

"But my hair is light," I remonstrate, forgetting, for the first time in my life, to be vain of my blond curls.

"We have thousands of wigs in the property room," he says, eagerly. "With a little belladonna to darken your eyes, a touch of Indian ink on your eyebrows, and a suspicion of rouge, if necessary, you will be the living image of Adelina Patti."

"Oh, yes, Madge; do consent!" cries Jake starting up and dancing with glee. "It will be the greatest fun in the world! I will go with you and watch you from a box. Do consent. By the way, Mr. Manager," he continues, squaring his shoulders slowly, "I must be allowed to accompany my sister to the opera, and enjoy her performance from the royal box. Nothing short of a seat in the royal box will induce me to countenance the appearance of my sister on the stage."

"You shall witness the opera from the royal box, young gentleman, if you can persuade your sister to consent. I half expect the Duke and Duchess of Edinburg, with their family and suite; but there will be room for you all, I have no doubt."

Jake dances about the room in unrestrained delight. I really begin to entertain the idea.

"You must come immediately!" says the desperate man. "My carriage is waiting outside, and I will take all the responsibility."

"Come, Madge, come," says Jake, and he leads me to the carriage.

We drive off with frightful rapidity. A fearful thought flashes across my brain.

"Let me out—let me out!" I cry, imploringly. "I cannot sing the high F in the 'Shadow Song,' and all will find out that I am not Madame Patti. They will tear of my wig, and then tear my body limb from limb when they discover the cheat. Let me out, sir!"

"Pray be calm, my dear young lady. The music will be transposed half an octave, and the public will be none the wiser. Rely on my great experience to make every arrangement."

"Don't make such a row, Madge!" says Jake, impatiently. "I won't allow anyone to injure a hair of you wig."

This comforts me a little, and I suggest an improvement on Madame Patti's impersonation of Dinorah.

"You see, sir," I say loftily, "Dinorah is mad. Now don't you think it would be more realistic if I were to extract my hairpins before I sing the 'Shadow Song?' I think it would look madder; there is nothing so madlike as the letting down of a woman's back hair."

"Excellent!" exclaims the manager, stroking his ferocious moustache. "That would be a real touch of genius; you shall have a specially-prepared wig."

But other fears assail me.

"Let me out—let me out!" I cry. "Why are we being driven so fast? I don't know the Italian words of the opera—I only know those of the 'Shadow Song;' and if I sing in English the imposition will be exposed, for Madame Patti can only sing broken English and I will be hooted and hissed as Marie Antoinette was hooted and hissed by the mob at the time of the French Revolution. Oh, do let me out!"

"Pray be calm, and rely on my wide experience. Great singers never trouble themselves to learn the words of an opera. They depend entirely on the prompter, and you can easily do the same."

"How you astonish me?" I exclaim. "I have often thought what a wonderful memory a prima donna ought to have in order to sing every note and every syllable in exact time with the orchestra. Ah, the orchestra! Now, Mr. Manager, here is a most insuperable obstacle. How can anyone so deplorably ignorant of the music as I am keep time with the orchestra? I never sang to an orchestral accompaniment in all my life!"

"My dear young lady," remonstrates the desperate man, "will you never be persuaded that my experience is most reliable? My orchestral leader is one of the best musicians in London, and every instrument, from the first violin down to the triangle and drum, is under the perfect control of the conductor. It is his duty to keep time with you. Judging from the way you sing the 'Shadow Song,' I should at once conclude that you had lived years in Tuscany to acquire so perfectly the purest of all Italian accents. Should you be at a loss, however, you can invent some mock Italian phrases. Hardly anybody understands the language in London."

"But I am sure to feel nervous," I say, "and I have not been accustomed to sing staccato demi-semiquavers and chromatic runs. I forget which passages are pianissimo, which are fortissimo, and which are syncopated."

"The applause and the bouquets will give you every confidence. The performance will be a triumph for you and the very saving of me. I am standing on the brink of an abyss—it would be cruel to withhold the only means of saving me. You shall have a box at your disposal for yourself and your friends for the whole of next season."

This is tempting, indeed, and I peruse a libretto which he hands to me, explaining that I have about twenty minutes for preparation. Jake sententiously says a great deal may be learned in twenty minutes. "It is not exactly a lifetime," he adds; "but it may become painfully monotonous and wearisome to hang by the neck for a like period."

The carriage stops at last. The audience have assembled, and the orchestra are tuning their instruments. Not a moment is to be lost. The Indian ink, the rouge, and the belladonna are all prepared for me; likewise the hairpin wig and Dinorah's peasant dress.

I don my disguise as speedily as possible, and rush to a cheval mirror. Good gracious! The desperate man was right. My resemblance to Adelina Patti is positively marvellous.

Jake meets me in the green room, and, for a few moments, fancies that I am the real, genuine Patti turned up at the last minute.

"I say, Madge," he whispers, "what a sell it would have been if she had really come, after all!"

"Hush, Jake; someone is calling for Dinorah."

"All right; I'm off to the royal box. Good-bye;" and he disappears.

I sit down at the wing of the stage, where a seat is provided for me, and I still pore over the libretto.

The manager looks over my shoulder, and demands in great surprise. "Do you mean to tell me you are studying the first act?"

"Of course," I retort. "The first act is played before the second, is it not?"

"Did I not explain to you that we never play the first act of 'Dinorah' on a Saturday night?"

"No. You never breathed a word to me about that."

"The public," he remarks, "come to hear the 'Shadow Song,' and not the first act."

"Fiasco!" I say, carelessly, as I turn over to Atto Secondo, and I purposely use an Italian exclamation to show him I am not quite ignorant of the language. "May I be allowed to ask if you perform the second act on a Saturday night?"

"Yes; and we begin with the 'Shadow Song.' They are adjusting the lime-light on the stage—the time must be up. I hope you are prepared now. I will prompt the recitative myself, and whenever the chef d'orchestra raises his baton you must begin 'Ombra leggiero.'"

"Oh, yes, I know all about it," I say, as I rush on the stage.

The tremendous applause is deafening. I bow again and again, but they will not leave off applauding. I look up at the royal box. There is Jake, sitting between the Duke and Duchess of Edinburg, looking perfectly at home.

What a forward young man! He is actually talking in a free and easy manner with her Royal and Imperial Highness, perhaps in Russian, for if I can sing in Italian opera, surely Jake can converse in Russian. Perhaps he is boasting that I am his sister, disguised as Adelina Patti!

Despite the tumult, the musicians resumed the accompaniment. Then, as I begin the recitative, a silence like death seems to chain my listeners; they have accepted me as their favorite prima donna, and I feel it would be ungrateful to undeceive them. My voice rings out with unprecedented power and splendor, filling the vast opera house to its utmost corners. My triumph begins. I enjoy it.

The nervous attack I anticipated is nowhere, although I must say I feel a slight shock when I see the little son of the Duke of Edinburg and my brother Jake squabbling over the possession of an opera-glass, but the sweet swelling sound of my lovely resonant voice soon consoles me. Then comes the crucial test—the "Shadow Song."

The stage is darkened; night is supposed to come on, and a lime-light supplies the moon. I must dance, and my shadow must be my partner and companion.

I proceed to pick out my hair pins. This is expected to create a furore—but no; there is not the faintest sign of approval. I shake down my back hair in the maddest manner possible—still no applause.

"Now for the 'Shadow Song,'" I whisper to the conductor. "Be quick! You can't expect me to wait all night for the accompaniment!"

But he makes no attempt to continue; he and his army of musicians seem to have suddenly assumed the waxen rigidity of the Toussaud Exhibition.

There is a row in the royal box. Jake has struck a pugilistic attitude towards the Duke of Edinburg, and the Duchess is trying to mediate.

What is this light, soft, silken article resting on my shoulder? I examine it closely. Only one of the yellow spiral curls that, off the stage I am so proud of.

Horror of horrors! I have extracted the wrong hair-pins! This is surely enough to disconcert me; but imagine my shame when I see, sitting in a stage box, regarding me with a look of scorching contempt, no other person than the real, genuine, unrivalled, inimitable Adelina Patti.

I tremble in her presence.

She rises; her eyes flash with anger. She extends her forefinger and denounces me to the world.

"Impostor!" she cries, furiously. "How dare you usurp my place?—how dare you gull and fool a high-paying public? This audience is my audience; every burst of applause is meant for me; the triumph is mine, and mine alone! I am queen of these dominions! No one can dispute my right here! I denounce *you* to my audience as an impostor, a sham, an incarnate lie! Maledetta! maledetta! maledetta!"

"Spare me—oh, spare me!" I cry, imploringly. "I don't understand Italian. I only know it as our parrot at home knows its speeches. I came here only to save the reputation of the opera house."

The prima donna bursts into a derisive laugh in which the audience join.

"Jake, Jake!" I cry; "save me, oh, save me!"

"Well done, old girl!" says Jake, right in my ear.

The brilliant opera house fades slowly, very slowly, into our drawing-room; the footlights become the evening sunshine streaming through the lowered Venetian shutters; while the musicians and their conductor gradually assume the proportions of our beautiful roses, with the stately Glory of Dijon in the centre.

I awake. Jake's merry mocking laugh recalls me to my senses. Even my amber Poll joins him.

"Oh, you lazy young woman," says Jake; "you ought to be ashamed of yourself—you really ought. The idea of sleeping in the daytime when you are wanted to play tennis!"

"Not only that," chimes in Poll, "but to speak in your sleep. Really, Madge, I could hardly have believed it of you."

I rub my eyes. Yes, it was all a dream: but not altogether an unpleasant one. No one, however likes to be laughed at, or accused of speaking in one's sleep.

"Fetch my rackets, Jake," I say quietly; "I should like a game at tennis. I am sorry I was asleep when you wanted me."

How they would torment me if they only knew that I dared even to dream of personating Adelina Patti, or attempting to sing *dove sonquavora*.

Mary Carland.

AN IRISH FAIRY LEGEND.

MARY CARLAND lived on the lonely shore of Glenveigh, where wooded hills crept down to the water's edge, and forests of Osmunda or royal fern growing six feet high, and patches of bog myrtle and fragrant wild thyme, formed the margin of the Lough. Not another human habitation was near.

James Carland was gamekeeper to the lan Borel, who lived on an King's county estate, merely visiting Glenveigh in autumn, when he generally brought a party of gentlemen to shoot over his mountains.

They put up at the shooting lodge at the head of the Lough, and Mary and James waited upon them, lighting their fires, cooking their food, and supplying them with necessaries.

This was the season of Mary's harvest. How pleasant to charge "the quality" a few pence more than market price for butter and eggs! How nice to charge the people of yonder village a commission on the chickens she managed to sell for them!

It will be seen that Mary's rectitude was not of an exalted character; but she was a dutiful wife, and no woman in the three kingdoms could have exceeded her in motherly love.

She idolized Rhoda, her only child, a lovely creature of four years old, her thrifts and possessions being laid by towards the child's fortune in a worsted stocking, that was hidden in a hole in the thatch of the cabin.

Rhoda trotted after her mother when she went up to the lodge, and the sportsmen stroked her curly head; and one gentleman gave up a day's grouse-shooting in order to paint her picture.

This artist and sportsman was not the only one who admired Rhoda. Some being but seldom seen by mortals, also thought the child very beautiful.

The grouse-shooting was over and the quality gone, and the Carlands lived at Glenveigh with the golden eagles, who built in a cliff across the Lough, opposite their house, and the white trout, and the rabbits, and sea-gulls.

There were other creatures nearer to them than they supposed; but James and Mary had never seen them, and were apt to speak of them slightingly.

A sad change came over Rhoda. From being as wild and merry as the rabbits in the fern, she became as quiet as the old gray cat in the chimney corner, who was almost too lazy to catch a mouse. Her mother used to say—

"Run outbye an' play yourse', jewel."

"No, mammy," she replied, unwilling to leave her stool, leaning her heavy head against the wall.

The poor child had a lump on her neck which grew larger, whilst she lost her appetite, and became fretful and very miserable.

One evening the mother sat beside the fire with the crying child in her arms, and the tears fell fast upon the pale, little face. Steps were heard at the door, and a tiny old woman with a hooked nose, long black teeth, a gray beard, and a red cloak, came in. She was a frightful woman.

Mary felt a thrill of disgust at the sight of her; Rhoda's wail turned into a scream; the dog and cat sneaked off to the furthest end of the room, where they stood snarling and spitting.

"Be seated, good woman." Have you come far?" faltered Mary.

"Not far, ma'am. I'm a neighbor o' yourn. I live on Tullyannon Brae."

"What, good woman, there's no house ava on the Brae!"

"Troth is there, ma'am, just a brave house, an' I ha' lived comfortable in it for the last three hundred year. Many's the time your wee girl has played herse'f over my kitchen chimney, an' a bonnie wean she is—me an' my family noticed her a good deal—it was new for us to see such a nice wean," and the hideous woman grinned so as to show her black fangs of teeth.

Mary now knew that her visitor must be one of the "gentry."

Tullyannon Brae was a hill about a quarter of a mile from the cabin—a wilderness of brambles, nut-trees and ferns. Nothing could exceed Mary's anxiety to conciliate this strange guest.

She produced her freshest butter and best soda-cake, and brewed tea that had cost four shillings the pound; calling her "your ladyship," and "my handsome woman."

"Your wean is sick. Will I gie you a cure?" asked her ladyship.

"A cure, lady? Ay, a cure! Be pleased to cure her," cried Mary, shaking less with terror than with eagerness.

"Weel, I" mak' a barga in wi' you."

"What barga in, dear lady?"

"This ane. I'll come back this night four weeks an' gie you three guesses to tell me my name, an' if you canna' tell it at the third guess, I'll tak' the child awa' wi' me to Tullyannon Brae."

"Oh, lady, the bargain's gey an' hard—gey an' hard!" the poor mother, shuddering.

"As you please," said the fairy smoothing her cloak with her claw-like fingers.

But as the child's wail grew louder, and her face seemed more pinched in the firelight, Mary's resolution began to give way.

"I agree," she sobbed. "Cure my poor wean."

"Very weel. Gie me a thread o' flax. Look! I bind it around the lump three times, an' bite off the ends."

Before the ends were bitten off the lump dwindled and disappeared. The child smiled, and dashing away her tears, jumped off her mother's knee, and ran to play with the gray cat.

"Good evening, said the visitor, moving to the door. "I'll be back in four weeks, an' if you canna' guess my name, my handsome wean 'll come wi' me."

Great was James consternation when he heard the story.

"We know that the fairies live near us," said he, "but we dinna' know their names."

The lovely Rhoda grew more engaging day by day, and her unhappy parents more miserable, and as the fateful hour approached, they lost all hope.

At length their unwelcome visitor became due. They sat together with the child between them, listening for a footstep.

"There she comes!"

No! an old man crossed the threshold, and asked Mary if she would be so kind as to give him a night's lodging.

The poor woman complied, and while he was at supper the child climbed on his knee, begging for a story.

"Ay, my bonnie wean," said he, "I'll tell you about the ugly witch in the red cloak, who is spinning at her door on Tullyannon Brae an' singing

> 'Little knows the wife in yonder cot,
> That my name is Trittemtrot.'"

"Oh, sir, what is that you are singing to the wean?" asked Mary, starting.

"I was just telling your wee girl about the old hag that spins and sings. I saw her a wee minute ago by the light o' a fine fire she has on Tullyannon Brae."

"An' what was she singing? Oh! my darlin' gentleman, say it again."

The stranger obeyed.

> "Little knows the wife in yonder cot,
> That my name is Trittemtrot."

"Trittemtrot, Trittemtrot," repeated Mary "she may come now when she likes."

While she spoke steps were heard, and the elfin woman appeared, striking the ground triumphantly with her crutch.

"Well, neighbor, the four weeks are up. Can you tell me my name?"

"Is it Nancy?" asked Mary, rubbing her brow as it puzzled.

"In troth it is not," with a malicious grin.

"Is it Bridget?"

"It is not; it is not. One more guess, an' then the bonnie wean comes awa' wi' me to Tullyannon Brae!"

"Is it Trittemtrot?"

"Who told you?" cried the elf in a rage. "Let me know, that I may tear him to pieces. I'll pinch him wi' the pains—I'll—I'll——"

The stranger went close to her, and whispered something in her ear, and she shrank as she caught what he said, till she was no bigger than the gray cat, and, uttering dismal cries fled out of the house.

"Now your wean's safe, an' you know that she's name, but you'll never know who I am," said the mysterious benefactor.

They loaded him with thanks and blessings, and he went away.

But, though Rhoda was safe, the family did not care to remain near Tullyannon Brae. They conveyed themselves across the ocean to the New World, far from the elfin wiles and spells, for that the fairies have gained a footing there we have never heard.

N. Y. Ledger.

WOODEN SHOES.—Many of the honest citizens of Holland wear heavy wooden shoes, which render their gait laborious and ungraceful. A number of the girls of the lower class drag these heavy shoes along with them. The children seem to be able to manage their wooden shoes much easier than grown people. When a dozen or more little urchins indulge in a romp in the street they set up a clatter which can be heard for blocks. The mother who wishes to find her naughty child who has left its task for street play does not at first use her eyes in the search for the juvenile delinquent. She quietly sticks one of her earsent of the window, and when she hears a loud clatter which suggests the tearing down of houses in the neighborhood she rushes toward the sound, guided by her ears.

When, at length, breathing forth threatenings and slaughter, she leads home her shrieking offspring, the cries of the latter are drowned by the companion's footfalls. The great advantage of the wooden shoe is its staying powers. Every one does not require a new pair of wooden shoes in his or her lifetime. When the honest citizen is informed by the blooming daughter that she would like to have a new pair of wooden shoes, he frowns and says: "My child, what is the matter with that pretty pair which your grandmother received as her wedding gift. They are still neat, though not gaudy. You must remember that times are hard, and family expenses must be kept down."

The common people seem to understand how to live cheaply. Many of the laboring men earn but fifty cents a day, and yet manage to support families and at the same time lay up enough money to give a decent burial to those members of their families who die.

COMMON PERFUMES.—Patchouli is made from a plant growing in great abundance in the Malay Islands, and is a great favorite as a perfume. There is a growing demand now for lavender water.

It is made by mixing rose and orange waters with the oil of lavender, and has a refined and pleasant, as well as refreshing, odor. Oil of lavender besides being used as a perfume, is a favorite article in bakeries as a flavor for cakes and fancy products. It is a high stimulant and an efficient aid to digestion until the system becomes used to it, and then it is liable to breed one of the worst forms of dyspepsia.

The lavender shrub and the jessamine plant are cultivated to a large extent abroad for this industry. The genuine heliotrope is not as fine an odor as the imitation. The latter is known as the white heliotrope, and is made from a combination of violet and vanilla, and has a soporific tendency if breathed for any length of time.

Bergamot, which, with musk, forms the staple perfume of the colored population, is a comparatively cheap oil. It is made from a small species of lemon, the best quality of which grows in the island of Sicily, and is cultivated specially for this purpose.

The fruit is picked while hard and unripe, and it takes about 400 to produce a pint of oil under pressure. Bergamot is a slight irritant, and it is said, will raise hair on a bald head.

The distinguished mark of the tuberose is strength, while the violet is light and pure. The verbena was once in a great request, but it is now rarely called for.

The rose geranium makes an elegant perfume, and is nearly as good as the attar of roses. The lily of the valley produces one of the richest perfumes, and the lemon, orange, and daffodil are much thought of.

AS a protection to trees against mice, rabbits, borers, etc., a screen made of common window wire is recommended. The wire is cut into strips about six inches wide, across the end of the roll (which is usually about two feet in width), and the strips wound around a broom handle. When placed around trees the spring of the wire holds them in place, and they do not bind the trees.

GERMAN professors are proverbially absentminded, but none of them more than Professor Dusel, of Bonn. He noticed one day his wife placing a large bouquet on his desk. "What does that mean?" he asked. "Why, this is the anniversary of your marriage," replied Mrs. Dusel. "Ach, is that so? Well, let me know when yours comes around and I'll reciprocate."

AT HOME AND ABROAD.

A very fashionable accomplishment now is whistling. Not so very long ago the tinkling banjo was all the rage in London drawing-rooms; but a man who can really whistle well is now warmly welcomed by the hostess on the lookout for novelties. I am told that there are teachers who are making a large sum by giving lessons in whistling; but I believe the art is by no means easy to acquire.

The vast increase in Congress since the adoption of the Constitution, is apparent by a look at the former House room and Senate chamber at the Capitol. The Senate chamber in which the Supreme Court now sits, is barely large enough for the court and its attendants. The old hall of the House, now the Hall of Statues, is not large enough even to hold the Senate, much less the House, with its 330 members. As the size of the legislative bodies increases, it becomes more and more difficult to transact business, and as no effective stop-cock has ever yet been found for the stream of Congressional eloquence, it now takes a week to get a thing done in Congress, which in Webster's and Clay's time might have been done in a day.

A Persian regiment on the march is a strange spectacle. Every three soldiers have a donkey, for there is no baggage train and no commissariat. On this donkey is placed the worldly wealth of its proprietors, and their muskets. Occasionally the veiled wife of a soldier also bestrides the patient beast. On they come in laughing, singing groups of a dozen at a time. The short tchibouque is passed from mouth to mouth. The colonel's lady travels in a light horse-litter covered with a scarlet cloth and quite concealed from the eyes of the indiscreet. The other regimental ladies, closely veiled, are borne in more modest paniers, one on either side of a mule. The procession extends perhaps over two miles. Last come the officers, chatting merrily, and smoking their silver water-pipes, which a ragged fellow on a mule replenishes with tobacco and fires with live charcoal as they are smoked out.

Sir John Lubbock's lecture on "Savages" is deeply interesting. To many minds it furnishes food for not a little thought. Very curious were Sir John's conclusions that the throwing of rice and slippers after the marriage pair was probably a remnant of the days when a woman was won by capture, the mock missiles being a memory of the indignation which the bride's people would feel when she was forcibly abducted from home. The symbolism of marriage in the marriage ring, too, the lecturer thought, was significant of the fetters with which husband and wife were once symbolically bound together. The wedding cake, too, may be traced back to the old Roman form of marriage by confarreatio, or eating together, and is also found in other parts of the world; as, for instance, among the Iroquois of North America.

The records of some of the first families is threatened by an exposure which may make some wince, but no true American will be ashamed of a humble origin. In fact, there is but little room for boasting among the New York millionaires. Peter Gilsey began as a journeyman piano-forte maker, and the founder of Cooper Institute first appears in the directory as "Peter Cooper, machinist." The Brevoorts were market gardeners. Alderman Carman, who left a round million, was a house carpenter. A. T. Stewart began by teaching a small school. The millionaire Vermilyes were the sons of a sexton of a down-town church. Cyrus W. Field first opened trade as a dealer in rags. Lawyer Hummel began as an errand boy in the same office in which he is now a partner. William Libbey, formerly of A. T. Stewart & Co., and now a retired millionaire, was the son of a Newburg carpenter. The first Astor that came to America was a butcher and had a stall in Fly Market. Robert Story, who is a millionaire veteran of Front street, began as a hard-worked boy in a cheap grocery. Jay Gould was in early life a clerk in a country store. The Spofords were shoemakers, the Stevenses kept tavern, and the Wolfes can be traced back to a gin mill.

A very curious story of mining romance comes from France. It appears that some hundred years ago there was a flourishing silver mine near St. Brieux, employing nearly a thousand miners and their families, and sending down to the Cotes du Nord a rich stream of ore and bars every year. But in the midst of its prosperity came the "glorious" Revolution; the shareholders hurried away, and the owners perhaps came under the guillotine—anyhow the village and the workings were forgotten in the excitement; the huts tumbled into matchwood, the "pans" filled up, and Nature reclaimed the spot as her own with briar and knot-grass, and sewed bracken and bramble on the diggings, until trained foresters forgot their exact position. But even bad memory is better than the best memory, says Sancho Panza, and a hundred years after, on certain documentary suggestions, the neighborhood was explored, the mines rediscovered, and opened. One of the first things they found was "a solid mass of pure silver refused from the ores, and weighing many tons," which must have been left behind in the flight a century or more ago, and was buried in mud and ruins. Such a find is curious, even in the dramatic annals of treasure trove.

Our Young Folks.

A STORK'S NEST.

BY L. F.

HURRAH! hurrah!" shouted two little voices one bright morning in April, as they stood on the verandah of their beautiful home.

"See! see!" exclaimed Willie; "they are coming—they are hovering just over the nest."

"They have taken it!" cried Ida excitedly. "I believe it is their own home. Oh, how happy I feel!"

The sight which had delighted these two little people in their far-off Spanish home was the arrival of two beautiful storks, which, after hovering about and circling round and round the cottage where Mr. and Mrs. Woodrow dwelt, had at length settled upon the roof, and were busily engaged in inspecting their summer dwelling.

The place where the storks had taken up their abode gave the children special satisfaction, for their gabled windows at the top of the house commanded a full view of the nest, and it was not many days after that their eyes were delighted at beholding four white eggs in the nest.

After this the mother bird was occupied with home cares, whilst the father stork roamed the meadows in search of their food.

Shortly after this, one bright morning, there was great excitement in the nursery. Two little faces are eagerly watching a scene which has them spell-bound. For they see the father stork standing with upturned head, whilst in the nest at their feet are four white little forms, which are nestling close together, though the sun is shining with warmth and splendor.

From day to day the children watched with intense interest this strange colony, and their curious style of living.

Insects, mice, snakes, but especially frogs, were brought in abundance to the nest, and Ida noticed that it was not long before the sight of papa stork bringing home a frog excited the attention of the little birds, which eagerly devoured the dainties provided for them.

"I wonder," said Willie to his papa, as he stood at his accustomed post, "what can be the matter this evening. Look how angry both the storks seem."

There was indeed a strange commotion in the home. Both birds seemed uneasy and alarmed.

"I cannot understand their fear, unless there is danger somewhere near," said Mr. Woodrow; "but I should hardly think any one would dare to touch them, for the stork is generally held in much reverence by the people."

At that moment a piece of stick, followed by a stone, a tuft of grass, and other materials alighted near, evidently thrown from the road by some evil disposed person.

In an instant Mr. Woodrow, followed by Willie, was in pursuit, and immediately they appeared on the lawn, two youths, shouting in the rear, took to their heels.

No attempt was made to follow, but their terror was so great that a swift punishment overtook them, for turning around to see if they were pursued, they ran violently into a peasant's cart.

They were terribly frightened, and not a little hurt. It need hardly be said that the storks suffered from their ill-treatment no more.

"I do not wonder," said Willie one day, when they were looking at the storks on the nest, "that the Moors have a reverence for these birds. Look now at the stork feeding its mate. Is it not kind and loving? One might almost take a lesson from their pretty ways."

"Yes, indeed," replied Ida. "And when I was cross or out of sorts, it has been a constant pleasure to me to watch their loving acts. I am sure they talk to each other when they feel happy, just as we do. It may be," she said softly, "that they are now singing their evening song of praise."

"But papa tell you," asked Willie, "that in many of the Moorish towns they actually have stork' hospitals, which are kept up by the rich people? In these, if any stork is hurt in falling from its nest, or meets with an accident, it is nursed till it recovers."

"How delightful!" cried Ida. "I love to hear of the Moors' fondness for those birds. They remind me in many ways of our dear American swallows, which used to make their home year after year under the eaves of our house at home."

"How still the mother stork must get, one would think, forever sitting or standing over that little brood of hers," said Willie; "and generally on one leg, too."

"But papa told me that was a very usual way of taking a rest," responded Ida.

"Yes, I believe that is so," rejoined Willie; "but see! she is now going to stretch her limbs."

And, indeed, at that instant the bird rose and flapped her wings in the air, looking the oldest, awkwardest creature imaginable.

Then she settled into an attitude of repose, while the little ones soon followed the example of their mother, and either dozed or chattered to each other, as they enjoyed the tropical heat of the afternoon sun.

Whenever the birds returned home to the nest after a short absence, there were happy greetings expressed by the young ones, which, though not very melodious, were doubtless signs of real joy.

The days passed on, and the little storks grew larger and larger, till one day the oddest sight imaginable was seen. Such a commotion was going on in the nest, but not this time from fear.

"A dance, I declare!" cried Ida. "Just fancy a dancing academy inside a stork's nest."

"No," said Willie; "it is a personally conducted tour. Look at the care with which the stork is slipping round on the outside of the nest."

"Ah, but it is first ideas of walking and using the wings," said Ida; "of course, the time will come when they will have a long flight to take to the south."

And, doubtless, to fit the little ones for the long journey to the south, the parent storks, as the summer advanced, gave the greatest attention to teaching the young ones to use their wings.

The little birds did not show any wish to begin taking a flight round their habitation, but, by following the example of their elders, they are long overcame their fears.

It was a curious sight to see them standing together, unwilling to stir abroad, whilst the father stork took a flight from the nest, and the mother said to them, as plainly as stork language could possibly express it—

"Now do try, my dear children, to imitate your father."

They then fluttered clumsily around the nest and soon dropped back into it, as if satisfied with the effort.

Before long they again took a circle round the home, and in a few days behold them fairly on the wing. Such long legs, such immense wings they seemed to possess for creatures so small!

One day a sad calamity occurred. The smallest stork of all, which the mother watched and tended with more care than all the rest, went off for a first flight, and in returning seemed to grow exhausted, for it sank rapidly down; and as the children were playing in the garden, they saw it fall in the hedge, and ran to the rescue.

But a peasant woman passing along the road had observed it before them, and when they reached the spot, she was tenderly binding up the leg which had been broken in the fall.

The mother flew about in sore distress, nor did she seem at all happy until the bird had been replaced in the nest, when she tended it with the greatest affection.

One day a movement amongst the stork colonies seem to tell that an important event was at hand.

Willie and Ida watched, for the last time that year, the great birds flutter and wheel about in the air, and then gathering together in one large company by the church, they took their voyage south to the land of the Nile.

JOHNNY'S KITE.

BY E. S.

NO USE! we can't cross that. No man living could."

"Then it's all over with us."

It might well appear so; for, with a flooded river in front of them, and a band of merciless savages behind, the two speakers were certainly in a hopeless plight.

They were two army officers, Captain Strangways and Lieutenant Gower, who were returning with their three native guides from an exploring expedition to the northward.

Just as they were almost within sight of one of the missionary stations planted in Griqualand by Dr. Moffat, they had been seen and chased by a band of armed Mantatas, more than thirty strong.

Could they but have crossed the river they would have been safe, for Griqua converts at the station on the farther shore mustered a force quite strong enough to protect them.

But this was the beginning of the African "rainy season," when one may cross almost dryshod on one day a stream that will be deep and strong enough to drown a horse on the next.

Even had they a boat, it would have been crushed like a nutshell by the foaming torrent that came rushing past them, whirling down large trees like feathers.

What was to be done?

The five men shouted with all their might, hoping that some one on the other side might hear them, and come to the rescue, but there was no answer.

Now, just then there was a little boy playing on the outskirts of the village, the son of an American missionary, who had lately joined the settlement.

Johnny was flying a kite which had been made for him by this very Captain Strangways, who was now in such deadly peril.

All at once it seemed to the boy that he heard some one calling out.

He stopped and listened. Yes, there could be no doubt about it. There was another shout, which seemed to come from the river, and Johnny made for it at once.

"Captain!" cried he joyfully, as he caught sight of the well-known figure on the opposite bank, "is that you? But you can't get across."

"Yes, I can, if Johnny will help me," answered the Captain, knowing that it would only frighten and confuse the five-year-old child to tell him of their danger, and that he must be careful and not destroy their last chance of escape. "Can Johnny send his kite over to me?"

"To be sure!" cried the little fellow, delighted with this new game.

He unwound the string, and the kite, carried by a light breeze, fluttered across the torrent into Strangways' hands.

"Now," cried the Captain, "tie the string to a tree, and run and get papa with a big rope, and we'll all come across to you on it. Run!"

Johnny went off as fast as legs could carry him.

"When I made that kite for the little fellow," said Strangways, "I little thought that it would one day save my life."

"It hasn't saved you yet," rejoined the lieutenant meaningly. "It's just a question of which comes up first, Mr. Hope or the savages."

In truth, though both men had faced many perils, they had never run so close a race with death as this.

Well might they strain their eyes across the torrent towards the thicket into which Johnny had disappeared, in the hope of seeing his father issuing from among the trees to help them.

All at once a terrific yell, ominous of evil as a hungry lion's midnight roar, rang out behind them, evidently at no great distance.

The savages had struck their trail again, and were coming up to kill them!

Captain Strangways clenched his teeth in desperation, and unslung his rifle; but just then Mr. Hope's tall figure appeared on the other bank, followed by two Griquas with ropes, one of which was speedily hauled across the stream by the kite string, and made fast to a tree.

It was a frail bridge, but it served to carry them over in safety, and they cut it away behind them just as the foremost pursuers came panting up the opposite bank with yells of baffled rage.

THE KING'S DREAM.

Once upon a time there lived a great and famous king, who, although he had all that he possibly could desire, and found a cause for great satisfaction and unhappiness. He was not content in possessing the love and admiration of his people in the present, but wished to be remembered by them long after, when he should be dead.

"'Tis true," said he, "just now my subjects love me, and my name is known and feared in many lands; but in a few short years I shall be gone, and who will then remember me?"

At last he joyfully thought of a plan by which his memory would always remain fresh and green.

He would build a church! a church so magnificent and so vast, that in all the world there would be none to equal it.

In order, therefore, that the glory should be all his own, he gave strict commands that no one should contribute towards the erection of the building.

So, in time, a splendid cathedral arose, and the king looked upon it with feelings of pride and pleasure, for was it not a fitting monument?

When the gorgeous edifice was completed, he caused his name to be inscribed upon its walls in golden letters upon a marble tablet, and that night he laid his head upon his pillow, content at last.

As the king slept he had a strange dream. He dreamed that he saw an angel come and rub out his name upon the marble, and write another there in its stead.

Three times that night he had the same dream. When morning came he summoned his court, and bade them seek throughout the kingdom for the owner of the name the angel had written.

Very soon the messengers returned having found a poor widow of that name, who awaited in fear the king's commands.

"Bid her enter."

The trembling woman was brought before the throne.

"Now," said the monarch, "what hast thou given towards the building of my church? Speak the truth!"

"Most gracious king," was the reply, "I gave nothing, for I am poor and have nothing to give except my prayers; else would I have offered more. Each night, indeed, I asked a blessing for thee and for thy work: and once—but once—I gave a wisp of hay to one of the poor horses who drew the stones along the road."

The king was silent awhile, and then he spoke.

"Go," said he, "erase my name from the marble tablet, and place thereon the name of this good woman. Rightly am I rebuked. Self-glory was my aim; what she hath done was done for love of God alone."

L. M. B.

PEACOCK AND NIGHTINGALE.—On a broad green lawn, before a white marble terrace covered with flowers, a magnificent peacock was enjoying the sunshine one summer morning. His breast was of the loveliest bright purple, and his tail was all full of green and golden eyes. He fancied that nobody in the whole world was of such consequence as himself.

Presently a nightingale in search of his breakfast flew down to look for worms on the lawn.

He had been singing all the night long to his mate, who was sitting on their nest close by. And he felt very hungry indeed. So he tugged busily at the worms just peeping above ground.

"What a mean-looking, ill-dressed creature you are!" said the peacock haughtily, and regarding the nightingale with great contempt. "I wonder you dare to show yourself on this splendid lawn, and in my presence, too!—Get away at once!"

"When I have finished my breakfast," said the nightingale. "I shan't be long. My wife is sitting yonder in the hawthorn-thicket, on four of the loveliest little brown eggs you ever saw in your life. I must make haste back to her, poor thing, or I know she will feel very lonely."

"Don't talk to me about your stupid brown eggs," retorted the peacock with supreme disdain; "you are quite beneath my notice: go away! I won't be seen talking to you."

And he spread his gorgeous tail out like a fan, and showed himself off with a great many airs.

"Providence does not give all its good gifts to one," replied the nightingale. "You are splendid to look at; but your voice is as bad as a donkey's, and sets people's teeth on edge. I am sober-looking enough, but my voice makes amends for that. Hush! I don't often sing by day; but listen!"

And he thrilled forth such a shower of sweet clear thrilling notes, that made the woods echo again.

The peacock was astonished, and gaped stupidly at the singer.

"There!" said the nightingale: "I don't want to show off, but I wanted to prove to you that all the good qualities in the world do not belong to one person alone. Take my word for it, there is some good in everybody, if we only look for it in the right place." And away he flew, leaving the peacock a good deal ashamed of himself.

A. H. B.

ABSENCE OF MIND.—In his "Voyage Around my Room," De Maistre discusses the very curious phenomenon of the independence of the mind and the body. He tells us how, in a fit of absent-mindedness, he often drew on his stockings wrong side out, and he had to be reminded by his servant of his mistake. Many readers will call to mind experiences of their own of a similar nature. It seems quite common to put one's watch-key to one's ear to ascertain if it is going; and many people are in the habit of winding their watches, and three minutes after pausing to wonder whether they have done so or not.

Who has not heard of the philosopher who boiled his watch while he calmly held the egg in his hand to note the time! Or of the equally erudite man of science who, having peeled the apple, threw the apple itself over a cliff, and then discovered that the rind alone remained!

Another individual had the habit—not such a very uncommon one—of forgetting his own name at awkward moments. One day he presented himself at the post-office for letters, when, much to his disgust, he could not think of his name. He turned sadly homewards, racking his brains in the vain endeavor to discover who he was. Suddenly a friend accosted him: "How are you, Mr. Brown?"—"Brown, Brown, I have it!" cried the absent-minded one; and, leaving his astonished friend, he rushed back to the post-office to get his letters.

One day an English savant wrote two letters, one to a business house in London, the other to a friend in Paris. In stamping them at the post-office, he placed the penny stamp on the letter for Paris and the other on the business letter. Remarking to the post-office clerk that he would correct the error, he changed the address! It was not till after he had posted the letters that he understood why the clerk had not been more impressed with his brilliant idea.

WHEN TO WORK.—Most people allow that early rising is advantageous, but there are, it is to be apprehended, comparatively few brainworkers who adopt the habit. They allege, and with some reason, that they can work best at night because the surroundings are quiet, and there is freedom from disturbance. When they state, however, that they themselves feel better fitted for work they are, as a general rule, misinterpreting their own sensations. They feel quiet because they are tired; one part seems fit for work because the other is too weary to protest. A recourse to tea, coffee, or alcohol helps the mind for a time, but the effect of these stimuli upon the wearied organism is only to increase the penalty that must sooner or later be paid in the form of sleeplessness and other evidences of nervous disturbance. Morning is the time for work.

THE BARNYARD.—The draining of the barnyard has attracted the attention of many scientific agriculturists who have differed somewhat in the methods proposed; but they are agreed on one point, however, which is that in the centre of every barnyard there should be a large, water-tight cistern, covered, over which the material should be placed in order to permit of the liquids being stored instead of being allowed to flow off. This permits of pumping the liquids every additional dry material that may be added, and has the advantage of enabling the farmer to hasten or retard decomposition either by saturating the heap or allowing it to remain dry.

REVENGE.—"Edie," said a cynic—"life is not worth living!" "Not?" said the damsel at his side. "Why?" "Life is a bore. Human nature is so tame, insipid, ridiculous. Society in the accepted sense does not live, my dear Miss Jones; it paces the time." "And has lots of fun sometimes." "Never! It believes it has fun; but it is very sorry, stupid, dull fun. I am a cynic. People bore me to death. Of course there are exceptions, such as you; but others talk and talk, and I—I sit and listen, and think what empty brainless things men and women are. They weary me!" "Well, why don't you take your revenge?" "How?" "Talk back to them." And the cynic grinned a sickly grin, and dropped the subject.

FOR HOGS.—Charred wood from the stove, or charcoal in any shape, is excellent for hogs. It is best to keep charcoal in the pens where the hogs can always have free access to it. Rotten wood is also relished by hogs, and they are very fond of burnt bread or other charred substances.

A NURSE.

BY E. M. C.

A nurse, a simple nurse; to the unthinking
Only a nurse, and nothing but a name;
A patient woman in her round of duty,
Living and dying all unknown to fame.

Only a nurse, a messenger of mercy,
An angel sent unto our suffering race,
With quiet step and tender hand of healing,
Divinest pity on her gentle face.

When all the world lies wrapt in quiet slumber,
Save the poor sufferer moaning on his bed,
Whose watchful eye with Christian love keeps vigil
Thro' the long night with silent softened tread?

Only a nurse, in duty all unshrinking;
Before such scenes, stouter hearts would quail;
See there! that sweet, fair girl, in sorrel trim
Is at her post, nor will her courage fail.

The fever we but terror-struck encounter;
Or fly before with selfish, coward dread;
While nurse and doctor hasten to the rescue,
And stand unflinching by the stricken bed.

Hark! that weird bell—an accident at midnight:
The nurse and doctor, wakeful, close at hand,
Who minister to suffering or dying,
The hospital's heroic little band!

There you or I may in our need find refuge,
With kindly help and loving tender care;
Respect we give those brave, unselfish women,
And night and day remember them in prayer.

EARTH AND ITS STORY.

The earth is a great globe, 8,000 miles through from side to side. Geology would not be a possible study if we were obliged to learn about the earth, down to its centre, 4,000 miles below the surface. All this mighty mass, except a sort of skin which encloses it, as the rind encloses an orange, is made up of metals and minerals, just as the fire has molded them. At first the "rind" was only the outer part of the globe of melted rock, which had hardened as the earth had cooled down.

The crust of the earth, so far as we know, is not more than ten miles deep anywhere, and in many places not more than three. This seems a wonderful depth when we think how long it would take to walk so far, but it is very little when compared with the size of the earth. Of course we could never have reached the bottom layers if they had all settled quietly down, one on top of the other, and staid just where they first settled, for the deepest mines cut down through only about one mile; but fire has come to our help, and broken and tilted them up so that the edges of the layers are exposed, and can be studied better than if men had dug down to them.

The crust of the earth is like a wonderful book, with its leaf upon leaf, close shut, yet each bearing upon it the record of a life long passed away. For hundreds, even for longer numbers of years the pages of this book lay unread. Men had seen them; they had perhaps guessed and wondered at the curious forms impressed upon them; but no one has looked at them with a seeing eye, no one had worked out the problem, no one had guessed the riddle of the rocks. Underneath those written pages, where the history of the past may be read, lies the fire made rock, like so many blank pages. No life had ever existed there, and so the pages are empty.

The first man who learned the language of the rocks was the great artist, Leonardo da Vinci. His eyes had been taught to see in another school—the school of art. Bernard Palissy, also a great artist in another line, found out some of the secrets written upon the tables of stone. He tells us, more than 300 years ago, that "figured stones," as the plants and animals in the rocks were then called, were the remains of creatures that had once been alive, and that they had been covered over and preserved at the bottom of the sea.

The crust of the earth is very irregular; great mountains and plains rise above the level of the ocean, and mighty valleys sink beneath their depths. The highest mountains stand only about five miles above the sea-level, and the deepest ocean valley sinks only about the same distance beneath its waters.

Great as this unevenness of the surface seems, it is less than the roughness of the rind of an orange, in proportion to the size of the globe. When you look on the map of the world, the continents appear to be irregular in shape. There seems to be no sort of rule in their formation; but there is; some things are like in them all. Each continent—Europe and Asia being one—is surrounded or nearly surrounded by water; the mountains run somewhere not far from the rim, making of each a great shallow, irregular basin, and the highest range of mountains is nearest the largest ocean. In North America, for example, the Pacific Ocean is larger than the Atlantic; the Rocky Mountains, which face the Pacific, are higher than the eastern ranges that face the Atlantic. The same thing is true of the other continents.

During the struggle of the imprisoned giant Fire to make his escape, many changes have taken place in the shape of the land, but the changes have been a sort of growth or development; the continents have gradually become larger, the land has slowly been lifted up out of the water.

Layered rocks are of as many kinds as seashores and lake bottoms. Some of them are fine mud, some sand, some pebbles, and some broken bits of stone or coral cemented together and hardened into rock.

A layer has often been traced from this condition as mud or sand to the place where it is a layer of solid rock, with all the different stages between. In the layered rock sea shells lie just as they lie in the water's bottom.

Think how strange it must seem to lift one layer of rock from another and find there the impression of raindrops—the record of a rain storm that had swept over some lonely sea shore numbers of years ago, which yet is as clearly to be read as if the drops had fallen yesterday.

The mountain ranges on the face of the earth are only the wrinkles of its crust, made as the cooling earth beneath shrunk and became smaller.

HAPPILY for the world in general, and each of its denizens in particular, the impressions which sow seed and bring forth the fair and wholesome fruit which nourishes all human life are innumerable, for a man may no more live without mental or moral impressions than he can live without food, in that, seeing, hearing, thinking and feeling, are the very essence of his being. The impressions that we gather at our mother's knee live with us and hallow our acts, which pass as outward signs of those first impressions, into the minds and souls of others. The impressions we gain from the lives of our heroes, from the faith of our friends, from the lips that we love, from the beauty of earth and sky and sea, from the strength and endurance of companions who are with us day by day, mingle with the breath of our life, and often make us God like when, but for them, we should be most frail, merciful when we would be cruel, and forgiving when we would fain avenge.

Grains of Gold.

Song is prayer on the wing.

The child of slander is never born toothless.

Self love exaggerates both our faults and our virtues.

Present unhappiness is selfish; past sorrow is compassionate.

Tears sprinkled across life's highway settle the dust of sorrow.

In youth one has tears without grief; in age grief without tears.

The man who never committed a folly never appreciated wisdom.

You can outlive a slander in half the time that you can outargue it.

A train of pure thoughts will only run on the track of a well-graded mind.

What is love?—Two souls and one body. Friendship?—Two bodies and one soul.

What people often denominate a sea of trouble is simply a notion of dyspeptic ideas.

Without the guiding power of reason there is not a virtue which cannot be exaggerated into a vice.

There is nothing so necessary as necessity. Without it mankind would have ceased to exist ages ago.

The fuller conceptions we gain of the true meaning of justice, the more we shall enter into its spirit, and the more its spirit will actuate our lives.

A large part of self culture is dependant upon the use that is made of the busiest and most closely filled hours. This is the same in every honest calling, whatever its nature.

Everything which thwarts justice, weakens virtue, creates suspicion, and afflicts the innocent, bears heavily upon every member of the community. Its injury is not confined to the immediate victims—it extends to all.

It is not perhaps much thought of, but it is certainly a very important lesson to learn how to enjoy ordinary life, and to be able to relish your being without the transport of some passion or gratification of some appetite.

Femininities.

Salt makes a good tooth powder.

The ladies of the Indies paint their teeth red.

A fashionable woman is always in love with herself.

There is only one unmarried woman in Canova, D. T.

Guessing the character from the eyes is a new society recreation.

At a wedding in France now the bride wears her veil off her face.

Handsome women without religion are like flowers without perfume.

Women are acknowledged by the Czar to be among his most efficient secret detectives.

The Bloomer costume was inaugurated in Lowell, Mass., in 1851, by Amelia Bloomer.

Bangles of coins of "different countries we visited in Europe" have just been introduced.

A pretty woman with a faultless form, golden hair and sky blue eyes, runs an 80-horse Corliss engine in Providence, R. I.

Lady Tennyson declares that the hardest work she had to do is to keep the old man from smoking himself into a mummy.

A fashion for drinking milk has caused to appear some tall and beautiful glass pitchers or ewers to contain the solid beverage.

Large square envelopes that open on the side have been introduced, but there is no reason to expect they will become fashionable.

A Lenten denial: A dimly lighted little room—A lover and his lass—A low sweet voice within the gloom—"I guess we'll give up gas."

Among the Freshmen in the Georgia University, near Athens, are two married men whose families live in that city with them.

The German government prohibits women from entering any Prussian university as students or attending the lectures of the professors.

When our great-grandmothers were girls cartwheel hats of such enormous proportions were in style that a stage coach could not hold more than three.

In Oakland, Cal., a young lady whose health had been injured by over-study, took to hunting squirrels for exercise and is making from $10 to $15 a week.

The headgear of the Swiss peasant is made of an immense piece of ribbon nearly a yard in width, formed into a two-looped bow directly on the centre of the head.

City belle, pointing to a wild plant by the wayside: "What's that?" Country cousin: "That's milk-weed." City belle: "Oh, yes; what you feed the cows on, I suppose?"

"Ah, yes," sighed a Chicago lady, "John has been a good husband to me!" "I thought you separated years ago?" "We did, but he is always prompt with the alimony."

Hundreds of households have gone wrong for the mere want of checking in time the habit of annoying, as a relief to a momentary feeling of irritation or discomfort.

Experience has shown that a greater amount of work is accomplished by sewing machines when run by electro motors than by foot power. There is also less wear and tear to the machine.

On the 31st of May, 1883, Marguerite Segovia, of Origny, France, went to sleep, and has not wakened since, nor so much as stirred a finger. She has been kept alive with milk and strong beef tea.

A damp cloth enveloping the broom head will be found desirable in removing the dust from a carpet in a room where there may be many small articles to catch the dirt raised by an ordinary sweeping.

It sounds funny, but the name of the new Consul to Mexico, a Missouri politician, is Elizabeth Caroline Moore. He was named for his two grandmothers. His grandfathers seem to have been neglected.

A novel design in engagement rings is to divide the ring, bend the cut ends apart, and hold them so by a small gold bar. A jewel is then set on each end, and the result is that the jewels are very close together, but still not united, and are thus quite typical of engagement.

The art of receiving and entertaining agreeably and gracefully is possessed in perfection only by the woman of tact, and it is sometimes said that small dinner-parties are the test of a woman's social abilities. A crowd will take care of itself; but the smaller circle depends very much more upon the capabilities of its hostess.

Enthusiastic girl: "Angry! I should say I did come home angry. I shall never go out as a missionary to the Turks again." Cool person: "Would they not listen to your arguments?" "Oh! they listened respectfully enough, but when I talked to one of them about the sin of having so many wives, what do you think the brute said?" "I am sure I don't know." "He said that if Turkish women were like me one would be plenty!"

An old Scotch woman who had put herself to considerable inconvenience and gone a good way to seek a sick friend, learned on arriving that the alarming symptoms had subsided. "Ah! hoo are ye the day, Mrs. Crawford?" she inquired, in breathless anxiety. "Oh, I'm quite weel noo, thank ye, Mrs. Grosset." "Quite weel!" exclaimed the breathless visitor; "after me hasin' come sae far to see ye!"

"John," she said to the young man who had been courting her for five long years, "John, I sat for my photograph to-day. I suppose you want one?" "Oh, yes, indeed!" "By the way, John, I had them taken specially for some friends, and they want my autograph on the cards. Now, John, I don't know whether to sign my maiden name or wait a few months until after I am married. I suppose you do intend to get married in a few months, don't you, John?" It was a desperate move, but she won, and they will soon be made one.

Masculinities.

A scientist asserts that toads are good to eat.

The heaviest of all burdens is a heavy heart.

It is a great point of wisdom to find out one's own folly.

Ex-Secretary Manning smokes from morning until night.

The sweetest thing in life is the unclouded welcome of a wife.

Many act as if they believed the horn of plenty was a glass of whisky.

A drama by the King of Sweden is to be brought out at Buda-Pesth.

The way of the transgressor is hard because many feet have trodden it.

Congressman Scott, of Erie, is said to employ 10,000 men in mining and shipping coal.

To soften the hardest old boots and shoes apply the fat from roast fowls with a cloth or brush.

J. A. Davis, of Nevada, Mo., sneezed so violently the other day that he broke one of his ribs.

The Smiths in England and Wales are calculated to be about one in every 72 of the population.

A Georgia bull dog in less than sixty seconds materialized two ghosts who came to visit a farmer.

Yale has a fat men's club under way among her students; 200 pounds is the minimum weight.

During a smart snowstorm at Modoc, Cal., a rancher was in town trying to sell a load of watermelons.

Judge Holman, the great objector in Congress, is described as having "the gesture of a creaking pump-handle."

A love-lorn Sergeant of Engineers at Willet's Point, N. Y., is in trouble for writing a 22-page love letter to a young lady.

A butcher and patriot in Oswego, N. Y., "filled his market full of all kinds of choice meats in honor of Washington's birthday."

Most of us lay up a good stock of patience, but we make the mistake of putting it where we can't find it just when we need it most.

A Connecticut man is suing to have his name removed from the tombstone of his deceased wife, from whom he was divorced years ago.

Julius Cæsar was very sensitive about his baldness. He had the misfortune to live to an age which didn't furnish pabout hair restorers.

There is no condition of life that excludes a wise man from discharging his duty. If his fortune be good, he tempers it; if bad, he masters it.

A Virginia justice of the peace has fined a fisherman $2 for contending in open court that the moon had anything to do with the ebb and flow of the tides.

The Maine House of Representatives has just passed a bill making 10 hours a day's labor by the strong vote of 108 in favor to 16 against the measure.

Small boy: "Mamma, Colonel Jones has a wooden arm. Guess which one?" Mamma politely guesses the wrong one. Small boy: "Wrong! guess again!"

Talmage says: "If Christianity is a delusion, wrap me in it. Enfold me in it. Roll it over me in ocean surges ten thousand fathoms deep. Let me die in the delusion."

A cynical philosopher writes in a French autograph album: "At twenty years love is a pleasure, at thirty it is a necessity, at forty a habit, and at fifty an infirmity."

An odd burglary occurred at Westchester, N. Y., recently, where thieves stole the forms of a paper which were ready for the press. Newspaper rivalry is the supposed cause.

Rules at the Washington Territory penitentiary require the hair on the right side of the head to be shaved off, while that on the left side is allowed to remain in its normal condition.

He meant well; but when, the other evening, before the lamps were lighted, he met the three rather plain Miss Joneses at the exhibition, he ought not to have said: "You can't imagine, my dear young ladies, how becoming this dim light is to you."

She: "I was so glad that you asked me to dance with you to-night, Mr. Random." He: "Ah! indeed you flatter me." She: "Oh, no; but Olive Ovington said you were the worst dancer on the floor, and I wanted to find out if she spoke the truth."

A lightning calculator gave an exhibition in Lansing, Mich., the other evening, and gained considerable applause by his rapid addition of long rows of figures. After he had taken up his collection and quit it was discovered that all his additions were incorrect.

A lawyer in New York was tried for the larceny of a watch in January, 1883, and convicted. His sentence was two and a half years. His conviction has just been affirmed by the Court of Appeals. He has been in the Tombs since his conviction. Now his term of sentence in prison will begin.

"What a beautiful child! What an extremely handsome fellow!" says the gushing visitor to the lady of the house. "Yes, he is a handsome boy, I think." "Oh, indeed he is. He is the perfect image of his father—the perfect image. Don't you think so?" "Well, I don't know. I never saw his father. We adopted him."

According to a recent authority T. B. Aldrich, the Boston author, when a boy, saw an advertisement highly recommending a certain hair restorative. He bought a bottle and applied it liberally to an old hair trunk, whose long residence in the attic had left it very little hair. The boy watched for results long and hopefully, but, it is added, they were not satisfactory.

Recent Book Issues.

"The Interstate Readers," published by the company of that name at Boston, are most excently adapted in the character of their contents for primary, intermediate and grammar school pupils. The adaptation of the matter to the various grade of schools, is just suited to produce the best results.

An extemely useful little book is "Cooking for Invalids," by T. J. Murrey. Its title indicates its character. The contents are most excellent recipes for preparing acceptable simple dishes of all kinds for the sick, told in a plain way. The book is nicely gotten up by White, Stokes, Allen & Co., New York, and is for sale by Porter & Coates.

"Easter Offerings" is the title of one of the most beautiful combinations of artistic pictures and excellent poetry we have ever beheld. The former are painted by Fidelia Brydges, and the lines are by Dora Read Goodale. A handsomer Easter present was never gotten up at its price in the world of art or literature. No words could do its beauty justice. Published by White, Stokes & Allen, New York. For sale by Lippincott & Co. Price, $1.50.

"The Hornets' Nest," is a tale of Revolutionary times, by Edward P. Roe. It takes in a fighting section and the fighting people of South Carolina, and with its glimpses of battle and love, the main regret is that the tale does not continue longer. It is as sharp and snappy as the musket shots so well described in its pages, and the reader will lay the book down convinced, though there are longer novels of its kind in existence, there are few better so far as it goes. Dodd, Mead & Co., publishers, New York. For sale by Lippincott.

"The Matrimonial Agent of Potsdam," from the German of A. von Winterfeld—a serio-comic story with little plot, but which contains a series of incidents, most of which are laughable and a few serious. Madame Haldrian is a good-natured widow who is received in good society, and whose penchant seems to be to promote matrimonial schemes and make people marry, no matter how unsuited they may be to each other. Fortunately quite all of her matches turn out well in the end, and she is finally induced to marry one Rarrer, a dandy, who has vowed that he will put an end to her match-making, and sacrifices himself for that purpose. The peculiar condition of German social life makes characters like those in this book more than probabilities; the author has evidently seen much of it, and his satire at the custom of huckstering off the daughters to the man who expects the least cash consideration is exceedingly pointed. The book abounds in funny situations, and is well worth perusal. Published by Lippincott & Co.

FRESH PERIODICALS.

Our Little Ones in the number for March provides as liberally and as acceptably in stories, poems, and illustrations for its young readers as ever. It is one of the few juvenile serials that do not shoot above the heads of those to whom it caters; and its art features will compare favorably with the best.—Published by Russell Publishing Company Boston.

The March number of *St. Nicholas* is a literary and pictorical feast, which even fathers and mothers of the children from whom it is prepared will enjoy. The seventh part of E. S. Brooks' "Historic Girls" has for its subject Jacqueline of Holland. Noah Brooks gives "A Lesson in Patriotism" in his story "The Fairpost Nine." There is a fairy story for girls, illustrated by Dora Wheeler, and a practical paper for boys, "A Commercial Traveler," in the "Ready for Business" series, by George J. Manson. There is a "Dog Story," a bird story, and many other stories and sketches, including chapters of "Juan and Juanita," by Francis C. Baylor, and of "Jenny's Boarding House," by James Otis. Ella Wheeler Wilcox, John Vance Cheney, Margaret Johnson, James Buckham and others contribute poems. Palmer Cox has another study of Brownies; and tucked in here and there is even more than the usual quota of pictures and jingles. The Century Co., New York.

The March *Century* opens with a complete short story by Mr. Cable, entitled "Grande Pointe," illustrated by Mr. Kemble. Mr. Stockton's "Hundredth Man" reaches its fifth part. Prof. John T. Stoddard contributes a valuable article on "Composite Photography," accompanied by eight examples of this fascinating art. "The Coinage of the Greeks," and "French Sculptors" are finely illustrated. Mrs. M. G. Van Rensselaer furnishes an introductory paper to a series on "The Cathedral Churches of England," illustrated. "Faith Healing and Kindred Phenomena" is by Rev. Dr. J. M. Buckley. "The History of Lincoln," by Messrs. Hay and Nicolay, continues to be a prominent feature. Charles F. Benjamin, gives his recollections of Secretary Stanton. A portrait of Stanton forms the frontispiece. The various departments—Bric-a-Brac "Topics of the Time" and "Open Letters," provide their usual supply of comment and discussion. The Century Co., New York.

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"Stop the Ship."

BY E. S.

IT WAS a dark, moonless night, in the middle of December, and the rising wind was whistling in the rigging and piping amongst the taut shrouds of the steamship *Sardinian* as she plunged through the Atlantic surges, homeward-bound for Liverpool.

The sloping decks were silent and deserted, save for the figure of the officer on watch, pacing steadily up and down before the wheelhouse, and a little group of saloon passengers clustered under the lee of the starboard life-boat on the quarter-deck.

There was some half-dozen of us in all. Two fair Canadians on their way to spend a Christmas in the "old country;" a couple of young "subs," coming home on leave from their regiment in Halifax; and one other careless pleasure-seeker, like myself, returning from a visit to the Far West.

We had been whiling away the evening by singing glees and telling stories, until the sound of the quartermaster striking five bells—half-past ten o'clock—warned us that lights would soon have to be put out.

Not feeling inclined to turn in, I bade my merry companions good night, watched them laughingly vanish down the companion-way, and then turned aft to have a chat with the second officer, who was keeping the deck-watch.

"You seem to have had a pleasant time under the boat there," he said, after a few remarks upon the look of the weather and the speed we were running at.

"Yes; and we ended up with a ghost story, which Mr. Burton told about his old grandmother seeing the figure of her husband standing beckoning her earnestly away from a terrace-walk which ran under a brick fruit-wall in the hall grounds. She followed him, and scarcely had she got out of danger before it fell with a crash just where she had been walking but half a moment before. His friend Wyvill, made fun of it all, and then we got into a hot discussion upon warnings and second sight and the rest of it."

"And do you believe in such things?"

"Not a bit," I answered promptly. "Such things, as you call them, never appear to cool-nerved people in every-day life, but only to timid, scared and very nervous persons."

"I don't know that. I'm not particularly nervous, I fancy; and yet a queer thing happened to me aboard this ship not very long ago," and he turned to glance at the swinging compass at the mizzen crosstrees. "If you care to hear about it, I'll spin you the yarn—unless you want to turn in."

So he began his story, whilst the creaking of the spectre-looking spars aloft sounded like the moan of troubled spirits, and the swishing of the water under the counter kept up a mournful rhythm as he spoke as follows:

"We left the Mersey the first week in May with a full ship—saloon and steerage both crowded—and made a quick run, for she is a fast boat, and the captain never gives her a chance of getting far off a straight course.

"We were five days out, and that evening some of the gentlemen had got up a concert, which was a great success, and everybody seemed in high spirits at the prospect of the 'quickest passage on record.'

"Of course this was before the *Arizona*, *Alaska* and *Etruria* had astonished the world by the wondrous smart runs which they have made. I relieved Mr. Jones at four bells, and took the bridge, remarking to him, as he turned to go down the ladder, that it felt uncommonly cold for the time of year, 'It's leaving a warm cabin makes you feel it,' he said, wishing me a pleasant watch; and the next moment I was up there alone.

"It was a pitch dark night, and a thick veil of blackness seemed to wrap the ship from stem to stern. There was no wind, and the sea was quiet, the stillness only broken by the dull, regular throbbing of the great engines as they steadily drove her along. I glanced ahead and could barely distinguish the watch forward, and then I turned aft and saw the dim form of the officer in charge of the deck leaning against the port door of the wheelhouse.

"All was right, and I began to pace slowly across the bridge from side to side, watching the white gleam of the phosphorescent water as it raced past and trailed away into the dark expanse behind us. I remember thinking what a nutshell this powerful ship was there in the midst of the boundless ocean, and how but a thin plate of iron was between the hundreds of souls now sleeping helpless below deck and the graves thousands of fathoms down amongst all the hideous creatures that live in the sunless depths.

I was roused out of my musing by the voice of the captain, who had come up to see if all was right, as he generally did several times during the night, for he was always alive to the fact that he had a valuable ship and precious lives under his care, and nothing ever made him forget it.

"I have heard him say to some gentlemen who pressed him to join them in a bottle of champagne to celebrate the speedy arrival of his vessel off the Irish coast—

"'I am much obliged to you for the kindness which prompts the request, but we are nearing land; and this night, of all others, I must keep a cool head and a clear eye for your sake and my own.'

"Well, as I was saying, the captain came alongside and said—

"'How's her head, Mr. Brown?'

"'W. N. W., a quarter W., sir;' I answered, with a glimpse at the binnacle.

"'Right it is—keep it so;' he bade me good-night, and I watched him go along the deck forward to speak to the watch on the fok'sel.

"Then I began my walk again, and my thoughts slipped away home, and I wondered how my wife and youngsters were. I lived over again in fancy the days I had spent ashore during my last leave, and then somehow memories of boyish days crept in.

"Suddenly a curious sensation came over me and utterly banished all dreaming. I cannot tell you what caused it, but a powerful feeling of terror overcame me, and I trembled like a palsied old man. A great sense of a dread of something terrible about to happen seized me—something, I knew not what; and I strove against it in vain. I clung to the bridge-rail in front, and tried to pull myself together, and I grew calmer as the low voice of some of the men forward fell upon my ear.

"Thompson!' I called; and the burly boatswain's mate came towards me with the easy roll of a seaman; and touching his cap, said—

"'Did ye want me, Mr. Brown?'

"'Everything right—the watch awake?' I asked.

"'Yes, sir; but it's pitch dark, and we can't see five yards ahead. Jim Dixon's for'ard.

"'Take a look round yourself,' I replied.

"Whilst the mate was gone, the terrified feeling seemed to leave me, and in its place an indefinable and hazy but powerful impression gained upon me that I must do something; but what I could not make out. You have no idea of the awful agony I was in, and how I strove to find out what it was that I now felt impelled to do. My brain seemed on fire, my temples throbbed as though they would burst, and a strange buzzing sounded in my ears.

I felt as if I was going mad, and the thought of the great ship in charge of a mad man on the bridge flashed across me. A wild feeling, that it would be better to throw myself overboard, crept into my soul and I believe I did make a step over to the side, when a ray of light broke in upon me. The turmoil in my brain grew still, and a voice distinctly said in my ear—

"'Stop the ship!'

"I looked round sharply left and right, but there was not a creature on the bridge except myself. I leaned over, and looked down on to the deck; but it was deserted, silent and dark. I even glanced aloft, but of course saw nothing there except the gaunt yards and the slender braces and lifts.

"'All right fore and aft, sir,' came Thompson's voice as his dusky form loomed out of the shadow.

"'What order did the captain give just before you came up?' I asked. Not that I for a moment thought it was his voice which I had heard, but I wanted to see if the boatswain's mate had noticed anything.

"'Order, sir? Why the cap'en be turned in.'

"'But did you hear some one say "Stop the ship" just as you got to the ladder foot?'

"'No, sir, that I'll take my davy on.'

"'Very well, you may go; but mind you keep a sharp look-out.'

"'Ay, ay, sir!' and the man moved away.

"I felt inclined to laugh at myself for an old woman, when a chilly feeling crept once more upon me, and something within me this time earnestly said—

"'Stop the ship!'

"I shook the feeling off, however; and, determined to give way no longer to morbid fancies, I lighted a pipe, and began to pace briskly to and fro, from port to starboard and starboard to port. But, though all traces of fear and terror had vanished, yet ever those words came ringing in my ear, and the faster I walked the more plainly I heard—

"'Stop the ship! Stop the ship!'

"Again I hailed the watch: All right forward? Can you see anything ahead?' and I peered out into the darkness round.

"'All clear forrard, but we can't see more than ten yards,' sang out Thompson, sollenly.

"So once more I began my measured tramp, but louder and louder came the command in tones of frantic entreaty—

"'Stop the ship! Stop the ship!'

"It was no use striving longer; I felt some potent influence force me to the engine-room telegraph. I seized the handle, and for a moment paused as I thought of the confusion and alarm which I was about to cause, and how angry the sleeping captain would be at my daring to do such a thing without his orders. The next instant I rang 'Easy ahead.' I felt the engine's throb more slowly. Yet again I heard, almost madly—

"'Stop the ship!' and without a moment's further hesitation I rang 'Stop,' and soon the throbbing ceased entirely. I heard exclamations of surprise from the fok'sel. There was a rare commotion on the deck as the captain rushed up the ladder in anxious haste, but before he could reach my side, the resistless power had overcome me again, and I rang down 'Full speed astern.'

"'In Heaven's name, what is the matter, Brown?' I heard the astonished captain say as the mighty screw began to race astern, and forcibly pull up, as it were, the great ship, which still forged gently ahead.

"Before I could answer, or even glance around, a loud shout from the lookout on the bows of 'An iceberg right on us!' was followed by a slight shock and a quiver and rattle as we ran stem on to the towering monster.

"What our fate would have been had we been steaming at full speed you can guess; instead of carrying you home to-night, the old *Sardinian* would have been lying fathoms deep, and her loss would have added one more to the mysteries of the sea."

There was a dead silence as the speaker ended, and we puffed our pipes thoughtfully for a few moments, until he added—

"That is a queer yarn, I know, and if you can explain it, so much the better. I have often tried to do so to myself, but cannot. I believe some unseen spirit was sent to save those helpless souls that night, in spite of all the clever reasons which scientific men find against the existence of such things; and I know that, but for that powerful impulse which I could not resist, we should have rushed upon our doom. My yarn is a true one."

Then glancing up aloft, he said—

"The wind is hauling around, and we must have some of that canvass off her at once."

With a cheery good-night he left me; and I went below and turned into my berth, the shrill notes of the boatswain's whistle, mixed up with the creaking of blocks, and the "haul-l-oy" of the watch in my ears, as I thought over the curious story which was told me by the second officer.

ABOUT RATS.

As a rule we prefer the rat's room to his company, for the little experience we have of his habits does not tempt us to cultivate his further acquaintance. Yet rats have their good qualities as well as their unpleasant ones.

Not long ago a French lady, who was put in prison for some offence she had given to the Government, wiled away the weariness of her captivity by making friends with the rats that swarmed into the prison from the neighboring sewers.

Every morning they came in crowds to her cell to be fed. If a young rat was so ill-behaved as to help itself before the elderly ones, all the others were down on it, and gave it a rough lesson in manners. Some of the rats were toothless with age, and, when a crust was thrown to one of these, the younger rats chewed it first so as to enable the old one to eat it comfortably. Rats, too, can be tamed and made very good playfellows.

The Rev. J. G. Wood says:—

"I have seen and handled a pair of tame rats belonging to some young friends, and prettier, more playful, and more intelligent pets could not be imagined.

"They were accustomed to run about on the table at meal times. They never stole food, but when anything was offered them, they sat up on their hind legs, held the morsel between their forepaws, and ate it daintily.

"They were very fond of a game which I saw them play. The rats were put into the boy's cap, which was hung on the hatstand in the hall. The boy and his sister then went to the top of the house and whistled. At the sound of the whistle the rats jumped out of the cap, scrambled to the floor, and then run up the stairs, and perched on their owner's shoulder.

"The general idea of the rat is that it is an ill-favored animal, dirty in its person, and revolting in its diet; whereas it is delicately clean in person, and equally dainty in its food. It is ever washing itself, and never eats without washing afterwards. As to the character of its food, a rat is the daintiest of animals.

"When it lives in granaries or corn-ricks, where it has plenty of choice, it wastes in tasting and rejects at least twice as much as it eats.

"This daintiness is recognized by ivory-workers. The docks where the elephants' tusks are stored swarm with rats. Whenever a tusk bears the marks of rats' teeth it is sure to be of the best quality, and fetches the highest price.

"The reader may, perhaps, be unacquainted with the fact that the most nutritious jelly is made from the shavings and filings left by the workers in ivory, and the rat has evidently anticipated man in his discovery of the value of ivory as food."

THE WEDDING RING.—As there is nothing a woman more jealously guards than her wedding ring, a few particulars about these symbols may prove interesting. The Roman maiden received a ring from her prospective husband in token of his fidelity. Gold was the usual material employed, but at the time of Pliny iron rings set with adamant were used to denote the durability of the contract. As now, this ring was worn on the fourth finger of the left hand. During the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the diamond was much esteemed as a wedding ring in Italy, as it was said to possess the power of maintaining happiness between husband and wife. The Anglo-Saxons used gemmed rings, a fashion they borrowed from the French. Wedding rings have been worn on the thumb and on the right hand, but utility and the desire to preserve the precious tokens caused them to be relegated to the finger they now adorn, although the fancy that a vein or nerve runs directly from the fourth finger of the left hand to the heart is very ancient and may have had something to do with the destination of the ring. Scholars tell us that the wedding ring meant the subjection of the wife, and the placing it upon the left hand meant more subjection. In modern Greece two rings are used—a gold one for the bride groom and a silver one for the bride, the inferior metal marking the inferiority of the wife.

A few applications of Salvation Oil will instantly relieve stiffness in the neck or joints. 25 cents.

Humorous.

SOLVING A PUZZLE.

Harry once had an ardent affection
For two lovely girls; but confessed
He was puzzled to make a selection.
Since each in her turn seemed the best.
He constantly tortured his mind to
Determine the endless debate;
Sometimes it was Maude he inclined to—
Sometimes it was Kate.

If Maude had a face like a fairy,
Yet Kate had a form like a queen;
As Maude was vivacious and airy,
So Kate was sedate and serene.
While years passed with Maude as his wife would
Bring happiness nothing might sate,
An equally rapturous life would
Be given by Kate.

And long he remained undecided
Which one he preferred of the two.
Between such attractions divided,
What was the poor fellow to do?
These doubts in anxiety kept him
Until he attempted his fate,
To find that Maude wouldn't accept him,
And neither would Kate!

—U. N. NONE.

Color blind—A green shutter.

Fast friends—Porous plasters.

A wide-awake citizen—The midnight baby.

Dog fights in Boston are canine controversies.

High and dry—The aeronaut with an empty flask.

An object of interest—Your deposit in the savings bank.

No matter how stubborn a man be in life, his heirs are very apt to break his will.

When Samson lost his hair he also lost his strength. It is not so with cheap butter.

Why is an acquitted prisoner like a gun?—Because he has been charged, taken up, and then let off.

Hint for married women—Man is like a lump of ice—the warmer you make it for him the faster he runs away.

Brown says that you often hear a woman remark, "There's no use talking;" but she doesn't think so all the same.

Brown: "Hallo, Jones, how's your wife?" Jones, a little deaf: "Very blustering and disagreeable again this morning."

"Yes, I will put some finishing touches to it," our editor murmured, as he concluded the reading of a poem on Spring and jammed it into the waste basket.

She was a heartless coquette, and cast aside the loving notes of youthful admirers with the remark: "I want something more than these. They are only boys' sighs."

"And so you liked the donkey, darling, did you?" he asked, taking the tiny lass on his knee. "Oh, yes, papa, I liked him. That is, I liked him pretty well; but I don't like to hear him dook."

Oh, softly the lover did lute on his lute, 'neath the pale, gentle light of the moon. But he swiftly turned and began to scoot when he saw the dangerous, large-sized boot of the man who came too soon!

Scene—restaurant. Kentucky Senator: "Waiter, something to drink!" Waiter: "Yes, sah, Watah, sah?" Kentucky Senator: "Young man, I said something to drink; I don't want to take a bath!"

Physician, to convalescent: "You feel stronger now, do you not?" Convalescent: "Oh, yes, doctor—very much stronger! I'm strong enough for almost anything." Physician: "Then I will send in my bill."

A lady advertises for sale a baboon, three tabby cats and a parrot. She states that, being now married, she has no further use for them, for the reason that their amiable qualities are all combined in her husband.

Some men never lose their presence of mind. A Richmond gentleman threw his mother-in-law out of a window in the fifth story of a burning building and carried a feather bed down the stairs in his arms.

Alonzo: "Dearest Edith, candor compels me, on the eve of our wedding, to confess that I am a—" Edith, in consternation: "Not a married man?" Alonzo: "No, but a romanambulist." Edith: "And is that all, dearest? That should not separate us. Why, papa was brought up an old-fashioned Methodist, and mamma has always been a close-communion Baptist, and they've got along very well together."

Make money add days selling "Wonders" and other new books. Write A. GOHTON & Co., Phila., Pa.

18 New Hidden Name Border Cards and Ring, 10c., 30 pks. & 6 rings 50c. Munson Bros., Mt. Carmel, Ct.

DOG AND CAT.—One of the novel features by means of which Germany will defend herself in the "impending" war is a battalion of trained war dogs, which are now being drilled by a regiment of chasseurs at Lubben. Commenting on the value of this new fighting—or rather biting—power, the existence of which is confirmed in German military publications, the *Petit Journal* advises Gen. Boulanger to act on the principle of "a tooth for a tooth," and continues: "If the Germans continue the education of their dogs we ought, without delay, to enlist a regiment of cats, and the battles which these two hereditary enemies will fight will lessen the monotony of field life." Not a bad idea this, if only the *Petit Journal* would find a means of curing the instinct of a cat to turn tail at the sight of a dog. If this difficulty can be overcome there is no knowing what the cats may not do, for their reputation as warriors has been great ever since Cambyses gained his great victory over the Egyptians bd the help of an army of Egyptian cats.

IOWA is looking for the champion medal for a young man there who lately during a somnambulistic spell arose from bed, dressed himself, lighted a fire in his stove, and then took a razor and began to shave himself. He did not wake up until he had cut three gashes in his cheek.

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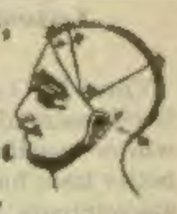

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Latest Fashion Phases.

There has been a great run on rough surfaced materials of late, thanks to the sharp winter weather. They are considered in better taste for skating and other outdoor amusements, and are also warm looking and comfortable.

Hats and bonnets are popular, made of the same Astrakan and fancy cloths to match the cloaks, coats, and gowns; and gauze veils of the same colors, spotted with chenille, are worn with them.

Plush seems to be still increasing in popularity, and the long coats made of it, with prominent pleats at the back, and fastened at one side of the throat with a short length of fur crossing over, are graceful, and look well on all occasions—except a rainy day. The dark brown ones, which are the most worn, look exactly like rich sealskin.

The long jackets in the cady of Astrakan cloth, especially in deep ruby, navy blue and gray, are much worn, with muffs to match, also in black, with buff cloth waistcoats and cuffs, and gold braid and buttons.

The sleeves and collars are of plush, and the muff is lined with the same, and has straight upstanding bows, like the breasts, or some colored wings.

Hoods, are to be seen on some of the little dainty plush mantles, and a few of the leading modistes pride themselves on the speciality of their own particular arrangement.

Long, plain, plush gowns, with full back pleats, are worn in the morning as well as between tea time and dinner, in the house.

Tea gowns are as general as ever, from the black velvet one with cascades of black lace, to the most delicate tinted brocade with old point guipure.

One recently ordered for an invalid to dine in, was of pale blue and pink brocade, outlined with gold threads, on a cream ground, opening in front over a petticoat of Brussels point, mounted on pale pink satin. The collar of brocade was turned over to show the pale blue satin lining, and tied with ribbons of pink and blue satin of some width, which were again tied and caught up at the waist, and fell among the lace folds of the petticoat.

A Brussels point collar, mounted on wire, stood up above the brocade one, and there were ruffles at the sleeves. The lace everywhere was delicately caught up by old paste buttons.

Barege skirts are coming in for quiet dinner wear, with smart little jackets of soft silk and lace. Some of these jackets are very elaborate. One, for instance, would be of cream colored Surat, with cream lace vest and olive-green revers. But the pretty and most becoming ones are the black velvet, with black lace ruffles and vests.

Young girls are wearing white muslins, spotted with colored wafers, and pale colored figured muslins for small dancing parties. They are made very simply over silk underskirts, and worn with wide silk sashes matching in color.

A new net for veils is in vogue, but it is not general as yet. It has a cross-barred surface, like the ground of some of the old laces, and is thicker than the spotted nets. It can be had in brown or black.

Chenille spotted net is a good deal worn, and also (during the cold days, when the wind is keen) gauze spotted with chenille, or very small tinsel dots. Real lace veils are scarcely seen now, except on elderly ladies.

When the spotted ones are not worn to the tip of the nose they reach below the mouth, and a few are mounted on a wire, and hang quite loose around the hat or bonnet.

Velvet ribbon, with pleat edge, is used for bows and loops. Red felt bonnets, trimmed with fur, are fashionable, and also red hats.

The fashion of wearing very long gloves is decidedly on the wane; they are worn below the elbow, and in Suede of the color called rose, which is identical with that of the arm itself. A quantity of bracelets are worn over the gloves.

Of three beautiful theatre or concert bonnets, one is in the Maron shape, without strings, and made of gold esprit net, drawn over thick gold cords; outside, a little to the left, there is the head of the bird called "nicobar," the feathers being green, shot with brown.

The second bonnet is in brilliant steel, worked on Irish lace; at the side, two wings of white lace, which join as a crest at the top; no strings.

The third is in black tulle and jet, with a mauve aigrette; the edge of the bonnet is outlined with a light garland of Parma violets.

Horseshoe muffs are one of the fancies of the season. They are made of the dress material—either wool or velvet—in bag shape, and are trimmed with a horseshoe, set on the front, of either beaded passementerie, or else of fur or of plush.

New fans for evening and full-dress toilettes are made of point d'esprit net striped upward with narrow picot ribbon, mounted on white enamelled sticks, and they are ornamented on one side with marabout feathers. A bracelet and bow of flowing ends of the ribbon are attached for holding the fan.

Women of small incomes take comfort in the fact that this is a "woolen season," because their three winter dresses—good, better and best—can be made of inexpensive woolen materials, and yet be within the bounds of fashion.

The stores are full of all-wool fabrics at inexpensive prices, and for these only very little is needed in the way of trimming.

To know what to select for the one new dress, and what to use for modernizing those partly worn is, however, most necessary, and requires careful thought. If an entire new dress is to be bought, it is best to buy the whole dress of one fabric instead of a combination of two stuffs, leaving combinations for renewing last year's dresses.

Three Paris model dresses which arrived recently, are good examples of the prevailing styles. The first was of cigar-brown velvet and poplin in a paler shade, the plain skirt being composed of the former, with a tiny kilting of poplin showing at the bottom. A long tunic of poplin open on one side was draped very full on the hips, from whence it appeared to be taken back and tied in a large full bow behind, and fell in long, full ends to the bottom of the skirt.

The bodice was of velvet, with a slightly loose front of poplin, confined at the waist with a narrow pointed band of velvet; and the stringless bonnet consisted of brown and yellow wings, mounted on brown velvet.

The second dress had the skirt made of wide stripes of dark-green velvet and red silk, the open bodice of the former, with a folded vest of the latter; and there was a high hat of grey felt, ornamented with high bows of green and red ribbon. Long grey gloves would be worn this.

A lovely shade of green, known as "forest," was the color of the third dress, the material being the finest cloth. The plain underskirt was bordered to the width of half a yard with a heavy embroidery of green silk (the color of the cloth) and silver; the same design reproduced in light sprigs around the wide hem of the overskirt.

The tight pointed waistcoat was of the heavy design, and the collar, cuffs, and fronts worked with sprigs. A green felt hat was trimmed with several small silver wings placed among knots of green velvet.

A handsome dinner dress had both bodice and train of moss-green velvet, with a front of white satin ornamented with cut velvet roses in a pale shade of pink, and the bottom finished with a full ruche of lace, in which were placed roses and knots of green velvet. A bunch of tiny pink roses in a bow of green velvet was arranged for the hair.

A pretty breakfast gown was of white transparent material striped with pale blue plush, and mounted on a terra-cotta silk foundation, a full cascade of lace from the neck to the feet mounted on pale blue, and ribbons of blue and terra-cotta introduced.

One word as to the flower ball bodices which seem to be very popular, and no wonder, as they are lovely if well carried out; but unless the flowers are really good—and good flowers are expensive—the effect is terrible.

Two sisters were much admired at a proletan dance, the one in a bodice of pale pink roses over a silk tulle skirt of the same shade; and the other had a bodice of white Roman hyacinths sparkling with dewdrops over a white tulle skirt powdered with dewdrop beads.

A pretty tea jacket was recently sent home with a fine black lace skirt, being of black surah, lined with dark-red silk, fitting tight at the back and loose in front, with a pouche of black lace over red; the whole trimmed with black lace, in which at regular intervals were placed rosettes of dark-red baby ribbon.

Odds and Ends.

GARDEN REQUISITES.

The spring, with its flower and garden opportunities, will soon be here, and we offer to our readers some remarks of practical character upon the proper management of any piece of ground where flowers and vegetables are cultivated.

It is quite impossible to make much progress in gardening without a trowel. Among flowers it is a daily requisition, and a tool of this sort should always be kept within easy reach by anyone who takes in hand the management of a flower garden.

A small sharp pointed trowel, a gardening knife or scissors, with a light garden basket, should be placed conveniently on a shelf or in a closet near the hall door, or what is better, if it exists, in the porch entrance to the garden.

A pair of gardening gloves in the basket will generally be found useful. For ladies, gloves of some sort are necessary, and the best and most economical are those sold under the name of housemaid's gloves. The leather is sufficiently thick to save the hands from dirt and from scratches when working among roses and other prickly plants.

When the garden is of very limited extent, one trowel as described, may be sufficient; but whether only one or more be required, these tools should be of the best description, the iron work and handle carefully and firmly riveted.

The uses to which trowels are applied cause great stress upon them. They act as levers, and the resistance they meet with in hard, dry ground, is frequently very severe.

The toy-like tools so often met with at ironmongers' shops are quite useless. It is waste of money to buy them. The blade of a good trowel should be fastened with rivets to the handle, as is the case with that most useful tool, the fern trowel.

In this trowel the blade is of steel about an inch and a half wide only—too narrow for ordinary garden purposes, but well adapted for sticking deep into the ground and taking up ferns, and also bulbous plants without injury to their roots.

The handle of the fern trowel forms an obtuse angle with the blade, and that gives protection to the knuckles when digging on a hillside or on a bank. A trowel of this sort furnished with a leathern sheath is indispensable for the tourists in search of plants at home and abroad.

There is a tool of another sort, which though not generally met, seems readily appreciated by those who have once used it. It is something between a spade and a trowel.

We had one made from our description by a clever village blacksmith some time back. The blade is trowel-shaped, fitted with a long iron neck, into which a spade-like wooden handle is inserted and rivoted so as to make it quite firm. The iron neck is slightly curved, which gives a better leverage than if quite straight, and the entire length of the tool is about two feet nine inches, or three feet.

From its size and strength it is fitted for harder work than an ordinary trowel, and it has the additional advantage, it can be used without much stooping being required.

For transplanting in the flower garden such a trowel is invaluable. When properly used, there is no fear of injury to the plant taken up.

According to the nature of the soil and the size of the plant, three or more deep downward thrusts should be made with the trowel, so as to meet underneath its roots, when the plant itself can readily be raised and removed on the blade of the trowel to the new whole that has been dug to receive it. It is often a great convenience, and sometimes absolutely necessary to remove plant and flower borders to other situations, and by means of such a tool, this can safely be managed even when they are in full bloom.

From a variety of causes—no one can exactly say how—perhaps from carelessly forking the ground, more than from any other cause, plants will get into wrong places—they grow too near to each other, or their colors are hardly blended. This can also be seen when in flower, and must, of course, be altered at once. In effecting the change of places, the spade-trowel will be found of the greatest use.

We had last year a long border of Narcissus, in which two sorts were mixed—the sorts very nearly resembling each other, and only to be distinguished when seen together in full flower, the trowel-spade enabled us to extract all the roots of the least valuable variety, and to remove them to another bed, where, with a little care in watering them, not a single flower flagged.

These little operations go far to make up the enjoyment of gardening, and though we often indulge in them, we are free to confess that they are best managed when under a lady's hands.

A knife for rose-budding, which is peculiarly a lady's occupation, is another requisite.

PROUD MOTHER: "Do you know, dear, I believe our baby will be a singer—perhaps a great tenor!" Tired father: "He takes the high C often, if that's what you mean!" Proud mother: "Yes; the tones are so sweet and shrill. I hope we shall be able to have his voice cultivated in Italy." Tired father: "That's it—good idea! Send him now."

"So Doctor Pellett is dead?" "Yes. He was an ornament to his profession. He has saved a great many lives." "Why, I didn't know that he had any practice to speak of." "He hadn't; he saved life in another way. "How was that?" "By dying so young."

Confidential Correspondents.

STUDENT.—Do not potter with mathematics. If you want distraction, get one of the clerks to talk French with you, and go on studying the grammar. Then read French novels like those of About and De Boisgobey, and you will have fun enough.

TENDER.—Have a little patience; do not break off an engagement without being quite sure that you have sufficient cause; you may have been wrongly informed. Put the question to the gentleman whether it is true—you have a perfect right to do so—and if it is, you will be justified in returning his presents and having nothing more to do with him.

PLEVNA.—"He followed you and me," "There is a difference between you and me," not "you and I." In both these cases the objective, not the nominative, must be used; the rule in the one being that transitive verbs govern the objective. "You and I" is so often right that, with persons with fairly correct ears but no knowledge of grammar, "you and me" gets less than its due.

NON-RETENTIVE.—We should advise you to rely for an improvement of your memory upon slow and careful reading and diligent exercise. Stop at frequent intervals, and make sure that you have thoroughly grasped the fact by putting it into your own words, and by setting it in its proper relation with cognate facts. Draw up a list of questions when you put your books away, and supply the answers the next time you take them up.

S. WEBB.—The weight of the human brain, according to one authority—Soemmering—varies between 2 lb. 3½ oz. and 3 lb. 1 oz. 7 drs. Another authority—Dr. Aitken—gives it as from 30 to 32 oz., with a bulk of from 65 to 84 cubic inches. Dr. John Reid states that there is an average difference of 5 oz. 11 drs. in favor of the male brain. It may interest you to know that, according to Soemmering, the brain of the horse never exceeds 1 lb. 7 oz., while that of an elephant dissected by Sir Astley Cooper had a weight of 8 lb. 1 oz.

DIRTY DICK.—Bentley, of Londenhall Street, London, was known by the name of "Dirty Dick" on account of his eccentric habits. The romance connected with him is, that he was jilted on his wedding day by his to-be-bride, and that in consequence he closed the room in which the marriage-breakfast was spread, and allowed no one to enter. On his death the chamber was opened, and it was found that everything was covered with dust; cobwebs hung in festoons, and the good things for the feast had all crumbled away.

BARBRA.—1. If you take supper, you are of course liable to dream; but the ordinary placid night-thoughts will not hurt you. If you have hideous visions—if you wake terror-stricken—if you feel as though you were falling from precipices or flying in the air—that means that you have a bad attack of indigestion. Try taking only a glass of spring-water and a little whole-meal bread at supper-time. 2. Your writing is scrappy and cramped, as though you had a twitching hand. 3. Turn the prongs of the fork downward.

DARBY.—1. We are inclined to think that Platonic friendship is nonsensical and dangerous. The man is decidedly a cool fish, and he should be plainly asked what he means. He has no business to keep the girl hanging on while the bloom of her beauty is passing away, and no false delicacy should lead her to ruin her life. 2. In the second case, the man is probably tired of his engagement. The lady should make a point of insisting on seeing him. If he is unwilling to meet her, then his affection is doubtful; if he is willing, then she may have a plain practical explanation at once.

ROBERTA L.—There is a distinction to be made between "passion" and "love," though the two words are often confounded. "Passion" is of the body, "love" of the soul: one is mortal, the other is not. The question of whom to mate is always a delicate one, but as a rule we would always advise a choice, where there appears to be a mixture of the two qualities. Then, though "passion" seem to play the leading part at first, love after marriage will assert itself and make the match happy. Thousands of men and women pass through life well and live blessed without knowing love as a "passion." In your case we think you would do well to marry your admirer, who seems to have many excellent qualities.

DAGMAR.—You are living amid the detestable gossip of a petty provincial society, and you have earned the spite of a matron who fears you may take away one of her admirers. Married women of her peculiar set like to have hangers-on, and they regard a girl as a poacher if she is seen to be attractive to one of the band. Your man has to be cautious. He is a cool hand, and, your sarcasm will not stir him. He does not wish to quarrel with the ill-tempered lady who claims him as her property, and he does mean to speak to you as soon as he knows how his health stands. You must not try a good fellow's temper by taunting him about the lady who holds him in bondage. His conduct is quite good, and you must match him.

ENRICO.—It is not a wise thing to try and force the growth of the hair by the application of lotions, and nothing is so good as to wait patiently and use the razor for a year or two. The same thing applies to remedies to remove superfluous hairs. Hairs do not grow like vegetables, and it is quite erroneous for people to imagine that they can grow or remove them at will. Boys who are very anxious about the appendages of manhood often find in course of time that they have quite enough and more than they desire. The ablest specialist could not produce hairs on his skin where nature had not planted them, and vice versa. We have recently referred to the difficulty of removing hairs by the electric needle; it is quite beyond the reach of most people.

A. O. MANDY.—The Suez Canal owes its existence to M. Ferdinand de Lesseps, of France, who first brought forward the project in 1833. In 1854, having with difficulty secured the consent of all the Powers concerned, he commenced work on behalf of a company representing a capital of $40,000,000, (afterwards increased) which was subscribed mainly by French capitalists, and on the 17th of November, 1869, the Canal was formally opened. Up to this time the expenditure had amounted to about $80,000,000. Of this sum about $17,000,000 had been paid to the Khedive of Egypt in shares of the company for his permission to construct the Canal, which shares were purchased by the British Government in 1875 for $20,000,000. The Canal runs from Port Said, on the coast of the Mediterranean, to the town of Suez—a distance of 85 miles. Its breadth is about 200 feet, and its depth is sufficient to allow vessels drawing about 30 feet of water to pass through it in safety.